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A SEQUEL TO

"OVER AGAINST THE TREASURY"

BY

COURTENAY H. FENN, D. D.

MISSIONARY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN BOARD, PEKING, CHINA

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Laymen's Missionary Movement

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FOREWORD

THIS little book is a sequel to "Over Against the Treasury," but is by no means a mere postscript. The unexpectedly kind reception of the former book is the chief reason for the preparation of this volume. Not a few friends have suggested the expansion of the thought; and so varied have been the phases of the great problem presented to the author's attention, first during his experience as a traveling secretary of the Student Volunteer Movement, and recently during his "active furlough" of visitation of churches, presbyterial campaigns and the follow-up work of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, that he has felt constrained to utilize still further that furlough in continuing the story of the Westminster Church in Jaconsett. Let the brevity of the forerunner be the apology for the sequel. "After the Convention comes the Campaign": the former booklet was but the Convention; this is the Campaign.

To some the developments in the Jaconsett church may seem so idealistic as to give the story somewhat of the nature of a fairy tale. Is it not rather a practical suggestion as to the realization of an ideal which we may never dare to call impracticable because set for every follower of Christ by the Master himself? It is confidently

believed that there is nothing here which may not be realized in any church, nothing which will not be realized in many a church which adopts in all sincerity the policy herein set forth, and appropriates to itself the promise of the Living Presence of the Master. The church has failed to obey the "Go" of the Great Commission largely because it has failed to perceive the "Come" hidden there in the "Lo, I am with you always," of Him to whom is given all authority in heaven and in earth.

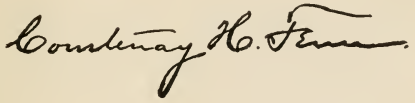
It will be noted that seven of the ten chapters correspond to the "Seven Characteristic Features of the Standard Missionary Church," so constantly emphasized by the Laymen's Missionary Movement. To these seven the author has, in his own work, added three others, namely,

A Missionary Session,
A Parish Abroad,
Definite Prayer and Effort to Secure Volunteers.

This sevenfold, or tenfold, programme is commending itself to thousands of churches as so thoroughly scriptural as to be worthy of the title, "The World Programme of God for His Church."

As yet no church has been discovered in which its inauguration has not brought about, as never before, the fulfillment of the promises of God. The author is returning to his labors in that land of phenomenal development, the great empire of China, with a faith greatly strengthened by the

assurance that the church in America is at last awakening to the realization that, in the beginning of the gospel and ever since, the promise of the Living Presence is only for those who accept the life programme of the great commission.



Auburn, New York
August, 1911

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NOT READ "OVER AGAINST THE TREASURY"

THE Reverend John Stanton, the young pastor of Westminster Church of Jaconsett, struggling in preparation for "Foreign Mission Sunday," slumbers at his desk and dreams. He sees Jesus visibly in his pulpit, but declining to speak to the people otherwise than through the minister. Mr. Stanton, greatly embarrassed, stumbles sadly through the service, breaks down in prayer for forgiveness for his own lack of devotion rather than that of his people; and then, instead of preaching the prepared sermon, confesses his own recreancy to an early call to mission service, and pleads with his church to cease making a plaything of the church's chief business, the evangelization of the world. Then the Lord again sits "over against the treasury," as his people open their hearts and purses under an entirely new sense of the greatness of the work, its urgency, and their personal responsibility for it. Speechless, amazed by the strange scene, the pastor is suddenly awakened by his wife's voice, announcing the passage of midnight.

Profoundly moved by the dream, he feels impelled to relate it to his people the next day, as his Foreign Mission sermon, and then asks them

to come again in the evening prepared to place their gifts in the treasury under the influence of the conviction that Jesus Christ sits just as really "over against the treasury" as though seen with the eyes of the flesh.

A large company gathers that evening, many moved by deep feeling, some by curiosity, while a few resolutely remain away. After prayer and a brief statement of the special nature of the service, all are invited to deposit their gifts, and to relate any helpful experiences and resolutions. Mr. Stanton sets the example by offering himself for foreign mission appointment, as he had failed to do at the beginning of his ministry. The senior elder, Mr. Stanhope, having seen for himself the Christ, confesses himself an unprofitable servant and promises "restitution" and the support of Mr. Stanton on the foreign field, while expressing regret that none of his own children have been trained for the service.

Elder Preston, wiry, nervous, close, not so wealthy, sees for the first time the real size of the two dollars a year which he has been giving as his share in the conversion of the world. It had formerly looked like two hundred dollars, but now looks like "thirty cents." He promises one thousand dollars a year.

Elder Austin, whom the pastor had seen in his dream, a disbeliever in foreign missions, has had his eyes opened to the suicidal selfishness of his policy. He has done large things in the past for

his alma mater and his own city, but is now impressed with the need of the world and with the pitiful penuriousness of the church's present provision. Convinced that the King's business is not conducted on business principles, he proposes henceforth to spend in that business at least as much as on self and family. To pay some back debts, he will endow a theological seminary in China with one hundred thousand dollars.

Elder Wentworth, seedy but neat, quiet, spiritual, unselfish, beams with delight as he expresses his thanksgiving for the new spirit which has come to the church, and, for the first time, envies his brethren who "can take from their pockets a missionary or a theological seminary for the heathen" at will. He and his wife plan to get along without some new clothes and increase their gifts.

Elder Ogden, a successful lawyer, a leader socially and in the Sunday school, clean but unspiritual, confesses his unworthiness to be an elder, and tells how he was coaxed and flattered by friends to abandon his intention to study for the ministry and to study law instead. Personal ambition had overcome the constraint of the love of Christ, but now he is ready for any call.

Mrs. Stanton follows the elders with the admission that she had dissuaded her husband from his missionary purpose because her parents, for sentimental reasons only, were opposed to her going. Arguing for greater conscientiousness in this

matter, on the part of parents as well as young people, she expresses her glad readiness to go with her husband wherever the Lord may call him.

Deacon Ransom, rough and ready, makes good use of his prototype, Deacon Philip, who "served a dish of gospel with every sandwich, and put in all his time between meals doing the evangelistic jobs that the apostles didn't get round to," and who consequently became a missionary to Samaria and even to Africa, through the Ethiopian eunuch, because "he felt that if the deacons didn't turn foreign missionaries, there was a great lot of people who were going to die in their sins." And "Deacon Philip" Ransom makes himself responsible for at least one apostle to the heathen.

The son of Elder Austin, also seen in the pastor's dream, rises in much agitation, admits that he had failed to see himself in the vision, as reported, because he had no use for dreams; but he has now realized that Christ has not occupied the first place in his life. He is ashamed of the fact that most of the missionaries are children of the comparatively poor, the rich as a rule rather despising the work. Renouncing this snobbishness for himself, he will go as a missionary to teach the heathen a higher, purer, better law than any to be found on our statute books, and at his own charges.

Further reports are deferred until Wednesday evening, and the meeting closes with the dropping of the offerings of all in the treasury.

On Wednesday evening the church is crowded, and again opportunity is given for expression of heart experience.

Mr. Ralph Jackson, a business man with a burden both of regret and of joy, formerly a chronic objector, has, in the vision of Christ present, seen all his old objections punctured, and proceeds to puncture several for the congregation,— "It takes ninety-nine cents to send one cent to the heathen"; "The church and country cannot afford such a waste of funds"; "If you send so many men abroad there won't be preachers enough at home"; "The task is hopeless"; "You can't make a good Christian out of a pagan." He manifests his conversion by giving two hundred times as much as ever before.

Mr. James Waterson, another objector, has just taken a tour round the world and lost his objections, especially his two criticisms of the boards, the one for supporting the missionaries in too comfortable a style, the other for exercising too little faith in plans and work. He has found it impossible and unwise for the missionary to live like the native; and has seen the absurdity of "thinking that, because a man gives up nearly everything in this life to go as a missionary, he should therefore be either required or expected to give up everything else when he gets there, while the man who stays in America is, by that fact, excused from giving up anything." He still believes in faith, "but not in the faith which

divorces itself from sound judgment and tempts the Lord by going ahead of him."

A son of the church, a senior in the theological seminary, has been making many excuses, chief among them "the lack of a special call." Much impressed by a parable seen in a recent paper, entitled "As It Was Not in the Days of Jesus Christ," representing the folly of the disciples, at the feeding of the five thousand, had they first packed baskets for themselves and then confined their ministrations to five hundred old neighbors "for lack of a special call" to others, he proposes to use his "sanctified common sense," and, being free, to go to answer "the special call" of the greatest need.

Another student of the same seminary, "accidentally" present, has been making a hobby of "ethnic religions," and has seen no need of replacing them with Christianity. But a recent address on "The Non-Christian Religions Inadequate to Meet the Needs of Men" has shown him the shallowness of his former contentions; and, without dream or vision, Christ has become real to him, and he will no longer deny the lamp of life to the benighted.

The president of a large manufacturing concern declares that he has found himself robbing God. He has torn down the old house,—a good one,—and built greater, and spared no money in its furnishing, simply for his wife and himself. Then his wife was taken ill and died, and his

house was left unto him desolate. Now, realizing that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," he will sell the house and use the proceeds for the evangelization of the world.

A young business man who has been interested in the new "Men's Movement" has admired the enthusiasm, the proposed "business principles in missions," the large sums to be raised; but is troubled by the fact that the missions are still unsupplied with the needed funds, and urges the call for something more manly than a mere childish "interest," even "passion," the passion of the Master himself.

The whole company is thrilled by the confession of a well-known society woman, who has been overwhelmed by the thought of the number of missionaries and native preachers and teachers that she and her friends have "eaten and drunk and worn, or kept locked up in safe-deposit vaults." Her first duty will be to release some of her own, under the influence of the new vision of the Master.

Finally the doctors are heard from. Dr. Corson, energetic, successful, yet ashamed to think of the long rows of doctors' signs in Jaconsett, when distant peoples are living in misery and dying in agony for the lack of a doctor, or through the use of the deadly prescription of a doctor falsely so called, will give up his practice and go to China at his own charges. Two others,

intimate friends of his, declare the same intention.

The service closes; the King's business has become the supreme thing in the Jaconsett church.

CHAPTER I

A MISSIONARY PASTOR

AFTER that wonderful week, when, as never before, most of the members of Westminster Church, Jaconsett, had realized the presence of their Lord, not only sitting "over against the treasury" as they offered their gifts, but associated in closest fellowship with them in every interest of life, their pastor, the Reverend John Stanton, his heart full of a joy which made radiant his face, hastened to fulfill his own promise. Not for a moment would he allow the wonderful developments in his congregation so to engross him as even to postpone that offering of the life service of his wife and himself which had come to mean to them not merely restitution for an early dereliction, but also an opportunity and privilege, the greatness of which they had previously failed to comprehend. It was now a fear, rather than a hope, that their forty years of age, with the consequent decreased facility in linguistic acquisition, might prove an insurmountable obstacle to their appointment as foreign missionaries; and in his application to the Board Mr. Stanton urged as an offset the recent spiritual experiences, which he felt, with great reason, had given them an even more valuable equipment for missionary work. Compelled to

wait some time for the decision of the Board, and realizing the necessity for crystallizing impressions, he set himself to the pleasant task of conserving that which had already been accomplished in the church. The presence of his Master and Friend had become so real to him that each day found him more fully entering into the experience of Paul, to whom to live was Christ, and whatever he believed the Christ living in John Stanton would do, that he did. He could not be content to leave Jaconsett while yet one single member of the body of Christ under his pastoral care was without interest in the mission of Christ and the church, the taking of the gospel of salvation to the unevangelized. Certain members of the church had been absent from town on those memorable days; and Mr. Stanton learned that some had heard with rather scornful wonder of the manner in which Westminster Church, famous for conservatism and decorum, had been carried off its feet by a dream, and become the talk of the town. A few also of those present at one or more of the services seemed quite unmoved, had absented themselves from later meetings, or, attending, had seen no vision of the Master, heard no constraining appeal from the Son of God to follow in his train. These various persons, feeling that they no longer had a pastor who was either safe or sane, were inclined to think that it might be just as well if their Mr. Stanton should carry his visionary enthusiasm to heathen lands,

and permit the church in Jaconsett to sober down into the good old ways. Among this dissatisfied minority were two of the Board of Trustees, both members of the church, Mr. James Harden and Dr. Hartley Sears. Mr. Harden was president of the Harden Trust Company, and Dr. Sears a leading physician. One of the deacons also, Mr. Henry Thorne, who had been absent in a distant city, on returning to Jaconsett the week following the last of the three meetings, having heard nothing of what had been going on, dropped in at the office of his close friend, Mr. Harden, and found Dr. Sears there in animated conversation with the banker.

"Hello, Thorne, where did you drop from?" was the greeting with which he was saluted by Dr. Sears as he entered the door. "Our dominie needs you here to steady him. He's taken to seeing visions and dreaming dreams since you've been gone, and the mischief's to pay. There's no more hope for that new organ and paid choir on which you've set your heart so long; and as to the men's clubhouse, that's knocked into a cocked hat. The heathen have come into our inheritance and walked off with mighty near one hundred and fifty thousand dollars inside of ten days. What do you think of that for news?"

"Do talk a little plain English, doctor, and give a man a faint idea of what's happened," replied Deacon Thorne, as he removed his coat and hat, and settled himself in an easy-chair. "I have

just got in from a western trip, and I haven't heard a word. What's happened to the dominie? And what's all this about the heathen?"

"Why, a week ago Sunday, you know, was Foreign Mission Sunday in the church. Mr. Stanton came into the pulpit looking very strange; and all he gave us for a sermon was the story of a dream he'd had the night before, in which he thought he saw Jesus Christ with him in the pulpit to hear him preach his Foreign Mission sermon; and it scared him so that he could hardly say a word, but just beg to be forgiven for being unfaithful, and then urge the congregation to give more than they ever did before. And, in his dream, Jesus went and sat by the treasury; and some of the congregation were all broken up, and there was quite a scene. You know the parson is rather dramatic in his preaching, and he just laid himself out on this as he told it until, lo and behold, all our elders and some of your brother deacons, and a lot of other folks, got hysterical and planked down the cash by the thousand. You'd scarcely have believed your eyes and ears, if you could have seen and heard Elder Stanhope and Elder Preston going on about the sins of the past, and the better things they were going to do in the future. It was livelier than a camp meeting; and it didn't stop with one service, but went on Sunday evening and the next Wednesday evening, when the church was packed to the doors, and no end of people in from the other churches

to see the Presbyterians get on the mourners' bench and cough up their savings. Elder Austin promised a cool one hundred thousand dollars to endow a theological seminary for the heathen Chinese, and there were a lot of doctors and lawyers and students who said they were going to drop everything and go as missionaries. And our minister's going, if the Board'll have him. I tell you there have been great doings these last ten days. Hard luck that you've missed it all. But there'll be more doing yet, and you'll have a chance to sign away your estate as well as the rest."

"Well, well, well!" said the deacon. "Who would have though that such an earthquake could have struck Jaconsett and the Westminster Church, too! Now, if it had been the Methodists, it would not have seemed so strange, for they go more on the emotions. But Elders Stanhope and Preston! It doesn't seem possible: just plain takes my breath away. And you say Mr. Stanton is going to leave us? Well, I'm mighty sorry to hear that, for it will not be easy to find another who'll do as well all around. But say, that dream of his must have taken a tremendous hold on him to break him up in the pulpit, and lead him to do anything undignified. A pretty strong sense of propriety has Mr. Stanton, even if he is a bit dramatic. Queer that he should have such a dream, wasn't it? I don't wonder that it made him feel rather queer to see Jesus sitting there

large as life. I declare it would have given me the shakes and made me think of my sins. But then, I don't believe a minister ought to carry his dreams into the pulpit to excite the women and children. He ought to confine himself to the Bible and real human experience, and keep his dreams to himself and his nearest friends. I am surprised that a man with so much good judgment as our pastor should have made this mistake. And as to foreign missions, they're all right after we've gotten our own country converted. I don't believe in offering to clean another man's house when my own is full of dirt and filth, which is only another way of saying what Jesus said, 'Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.' On this trip, I've been seeing some slums that were worse than anything in China, I know. And nearly half our own city is made up of foreigners, and scarcely anyone is doing anything for them. First clean up these places, say I, and then we can begin to think about Africa and the rest of them. And then think of the poor people here at home, too. Our deacons' fund is never half large enough to meet the real, desperate need right among our own people. There are at least a dozen families who, on account of sickness, or lack of employment, have to be helped all the time."

"Yes, and the Charity Organization and the Salvation Army, and the Society for the Preven-

tion of Cruelty to Children, and the Eye and Ear Hospital and the Maternity Hospital, and a dozen other organizations here in our own town, are around with their subscription papers every few days," said Mr. Harden. "And the Y. M. C. A. needs a new building, and the church parlor wants a new carpet, and the ancient Church of Armenia wants resuscitating, and it's just beg, beg, beg, day after day, week in and week out, until a man feels that he is no longer free to do what he will with his own and there's no more pleasure in life. It would almost be a relief not to have any money." Mr. Harden had been sitting with his back to the door, and had not noticed its opening. Hearing a sound, he turned about to behold their pastor, Mr. Stanton, to whom the door had been opened quietly by Dr. Sears, who rather mischievously permitted the minister to hear the last sentences which Mr. Harden had spoken. The latter rose hastily, and, in some confusion, extended his hand to Mr. Stanton, who shook it heartily as he said:

"Good morning, friends! This is better luck than I had expected. Every last one of you was on my list for this morning; but I never dreamed of finding you together. Deacon Thorne, I cannot tell you how sorry I am that you have been away from town this last week or so. You have missed the richest experience in all the history of Westminster Church. You know we have often prayed that Christ might reveal himself to us,

that we might see him with the eye of faith; and he has answered our prayers in a very wonderful way. Perhaps you have heard something about it since your return. Although it began with an extraordinary dream of mine on the Saturday evening before Foreign Mission Sunday, yet I don't believe that our Master was any more real to me in that dream than he became next day to scores of the people in our church, to whose minds he was just as clearly present, sitting over against the treasury, as if they had seen him with their eyes and heard his voice. And the beautiful thing about it is that, so far as I can learn, he remains a living presence to every one of those who on that day, or the Wednesday evening following, accepted the fact of his presence as the controlling factor in their future lives. The whole spiritual atmosphere of the church has changed; every form of Christian activity has taken on so much new life that really my only anxious concern these days is for the men who, like you, were absent from town, and the few who saw no vision."

"When you came in, Dr. Sears and Mr. Harden were telling me what has been going on, Mr. Stanton," replied Mr. Thorne; "and I must say I was surprised to learn that you had been taking a dream into the pulpit. Of course, I know that so-called dreams, like Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, have been used to do great good; but that was only a make-believe dream, after all. You don't believe, do you, that the dreams which come to

us in our sleep should guide us in our waking hours, instead of the sober judgment of the day?"

"Thank you, Deacon Thorne, for that term 'sober judgment,' for it will help me to answer you. Suppose a dream of the night brings strikingly to your attention a fact which the 'sober judgment of the day' at once approves as one of the most important facts in your life, though long overlooked and neglected. Would you spurn that fact simply because its first suggestion came in the form of a dream? Surely you would not."

"No, Mr. Stanton, that's right, though I hadn't thought of it before in that way. In those circumstances, a minister would certainly be justified in mentioning his dream to his people. But how do you apply the test to this dream of yours, of which I have heard but a little? Do you think Jesus Christ is as really present with us as if we could see him?"

"I assuredly do, and more really," said Mr. Stanton; "for his visible presence would confine him to one place; while his spiritual presence, carrying the whole of his personality and wisdom and power and love, may be with every disciple of his the world around; and, what is better still, not only with, but in. This is exactly what Paul meant when he said, 'To me to live is Christ.' Paul was so conscious of his absolute possession by Christ that he knew no other life than that which Christ lived in him. Theoretically, I believed all this

long ago; but it never became real to me until God, in his yearning over me, and over our church, used the unusual means of a dream or vision of the night to awaken my 'sober judgment of the day.' If you had been with us, Deacon Thorne, I feel very sure that your mind and heart would have yielded assent to the fact, and responded to the compelling claim of that fact. The only thing that was done by anyone on those two great days was to seek voluntarily to square our lives with that newly realized fact of the living presence of Christ."

"Well, Mr. Stanton, that certainly seems logical, even if it is rather unusual; and I don't wonder our people were pretty well shaken up by the thoughts of that day, for they are already leading me to asking myself some rather uncomfortable questions. I should have to admit that neither my living nor my giving is just what I should want to make it if I could see Jesus with me all the time. For instance, I am compelled to confess that while I did not go away with that in view, I rather congratulated myself on having missed Foreign Mission Sunday, and so not being likely to be called on for a contribution for another year! That sounds rather bad for a deacon, doesn't it?"

"O Deacon Thorne, you too are seeing Him who is invisible, or you never would have owned up to that! I can safely leave you to him for further guidance. And now, Mr. Harden, since I have found this unexpectedly large audience

here, will you excuse me for making a text of a few words I heard you say as I entered the door? I had no idea that I was overhearing what was not intended for my ears; and I rather think from his looks that our friend, Dr. Sears, was the guilty party. Eh, Dr. Sears?'

"As long as confessions are in order, I am afraid that I shall have to admit that I was malicious enough to make no delay or noise about your admission, when I saw you coming up the steps," replied the doctor. "But Harden was not saying anything worse than the rest of us, merely using a bit more picturesque language, that was all. '

"Well, I don't wonder that you men sometimes feel inclined to use 'picturesque language' about the multiplicity of calls for benevolence in these days, for I have felt very much inclined that way myself at times. You know the first man appealed to by almost every one of these organizations is the Presbyterian minister, not so much for his money as for his name, for everybody has learned that 'the Presbyterians are God's foolish people,' and will give their money to every interdenominational, or undenominational, benevolence under the sun, while leaving their own denominational work but half provided for. It is a pleasure to think that we have a reputation as a liberal people, and that we have a share in so many broad, philanthropic and Christian efforts, even though so much of our money is given to irresponsible beggars, native and foreign, who

work upon our feelings, and perhaps come recommended by some prominent man who gave them a dollar or his name—or perhaps both—to get rid of them. But there is all the difference in the world between these outside applications and the call of the church to its own support and to the evangelization of the world. The former we may do, if we have the means and are convinced that they are wise; the latter we must do, if we are to win our Master's 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' But please notice also a marked difference between church support and world evangelization. The former, while it includes a benevolent effort, the providing of a house of worship for strangers, is yet chiefly an honest paying for what you get, the comfortable place of worship, the music of a trained choir, the preaching of an educated minister, a thing which is not benevolent at all. Even local charities and improvements, while they may be in part to help the needy, are also in part to improve one's own surroundings, and make the community more desirable for residence, more attractive for business. The farther you go from any possible advantage to yourself, the nearer you get to pure benevolence. Missions to those with whom we are in no personal relations are conducted solely for Christ's sake and for humanity's, and are the highest manifestation of unselfishness. Isn't it so, doctor? If you should perform an operation for a well-to-do patient and charge him five

hundred dollars for it, you wouldn't put that operation down as an exhibition of beneficence, would you? Or if you paid two dollars for a ticket to a lecture by Lieutenant Peary on the discovery of the North Pole, you would not charge that up as an indication of your love for Christ and humanity, would you? But if you performed a five-hundred-dollar operation for a penniless Christian, and charged him nothing for it, or for Christ's sake sent two dollars to a struggling clerk to enable him to attend the lecture, you would never hesitate to reckon that as Christian beneficence. Missions are just one degree higher than that; they are not merely the seeking of the physical and intellectual advantage of men who may have no direct human claim upon us, but the exaltation of the spiritual advantage above all; the desire to give them not only some of the good that we have, but the very best, for this life and the life to come. Paul felt himself a debtor to all men. What is a debtor, Dr. Sears?"

"I believe he has been defined as 'a man who has something that belongs to some one else,'" replied Dr. Sears, deeply interested in Mr. Stanton's argument.

"Exactly; and Paul felt that in the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ he had something which belonged to all men; and that that debt would never be paid until he had given that gospel to everyone whom he could possibly reach," pursued

Mr. Stanton. "Our Master, Jesus Christ, constantly acknowledged the same debt; and when he commissioned his disciples, through all the ages until he should come, he bade them consider this their debt until the gospel had been preached to every creature, and they had been taught to obey all things whatsoever he had commanded them. I am amazed that I never until recently noticed the connection there; it is only to those who undertake this commission that he gives the promise, 'And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' That connection has been finely expressed in a motto of the Men's Missionary Movement, 'The resources of God are promised only to those who adopt the programme of God.'

"We sometimes wonder why the church accomplishes so little here in America. I know now that our weakness and inefficiency are chiefly due to the fact that, forgetful of the lessons of the early days of Christianity, we have stopped at the first division of God's programme, 'Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem,' and have not even looked after 'all Judæa,' to say nothing of Samaria and the uttermost part of the earth."

"Have you any proof of that, Mr. Stanton?" inquired Mr. Harden, somewhat skeptically.

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Harden, and I could furnish it by the volume, if we had the time or patience. Just take two instances. One is that oft-quoted one about the Mission Baptists and the non-

Mission Baptists. The denomination split on the question thirty years ago. To-day the Mission Baptists are ten times as numerous as they were, while the non-Mission Baptists stand just where they did thirty years ago. The other is that now famous church in Kansas, which, cumbered with a heavy debt, was just about discouraged. The pastor became possessed of the conviction which I have just stated, and led his amazed people in a foreign mission crusade. In a short time not only were they supporting a missionary of their own, but their debt was paid, their church improved, the pastor's salary increased, and the contributions to all the boards of the church greatly enlarged. It is only the fulfillment of the old promise of blessing to those who bring the tithes into the storehouse."

"Speaking of tithes, Mr. Stanton," said Mr. Harden, "I hope you are not going to introduce that idea into Westminster Church! 'Ye are not under the law, but under grace'; and I hate to see a hard and fast rule forced on Christian people. 'God loveth a cheerful giver'; and I don't believe he cares very much for what is given grudgingly, or as a matter of rule."

"You and I are not very far apart there, Mr. Harden, though I think possibly we need a definition of terms. The tithe was the Old Testament legal measure of the Jew's responsibility for the maintenance of his own religious worship and of the ministers who performed its

rites and taught its laws. The strictly beneficent work of the Jews and their special expressions of thanksgiving were a matter of additional free-will offerings, which often amounted to more than another tithe. Being not under the law, but under grace, the Christian's feeling of gratitude for that grace, and its manifestation in a more perfect law of love, would naturally be greater than that of the Jew; and, whatever he might do by tithe or otherwise for the maintenance of his own opportunities for worship, he should certainly be inclined to do more than the Jew under the law in the way of free-will offerings for beneficence. The fact, however, that a man will give 'cheerfully' one tenth of one per cent of his income, while he would only give 'grudgingly' one tenth of his income, would hardly limit his obligations to the one tenth of one per cent, would it, Mr. Harden? There is another verse in very close connection with that one, which says that 'he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.' It is a rule without exceptions; and while God is not satisfied with the grudging gifts, it is his will that every child of his shall so study the programme of God as to accept it as the expression of infinite wisdom and love, when at once the carrying out of that programme takes first place in heart and life, and not only a tenth, but much more in the case of those who have means, is given 'cheerfully.'

"We are speaking to one another with the

utmost frankness now," continued Mr. Stanton, "so I am sure you will excuse me if I refer to another word which you were saying when I came in. You spoke of being 'no longer free to do what one will with one's own.' Our Master himself used the expression, and in the sense in which he used it, it conveys an important truth. Provided a man does not use what is his own to interfere with or override the rights and liberties of other men, he is free to do what he will with his own. But that is only one side of the truth, for while he is free, he is also responsible. Responsible to whom? To his Master. The Christian is a freeman only because he has heartily accepted the blessed rule of a perfect Master with a perfect law. One is our Master, even Christ. We are not our own; we are bought with a price; therefore glorify God with your bodies and your spirits, which are God's. If we are not our own, how much less the wealth which we may have, which, as his servants, we hold merely in trust for him, to be used under his direction for his glory! The Christian is always free to do what he will with his own; but what the Christian who realizes the constant presence of Christ wills to do with his own, is neither more nor less than what he believes Christ would like to have done with it.

"Pardon me if I have spoken plainly. The new conditions have taken so strong a hold on me that I long to have every member of the church share with me the beauty, the joy, the power of

them. Now I must not take more of the time of busy men like yourselves; but I believe the day is coming when we shall all think alike on this subject, and it will not stop with us. I bid you all good morning."

And Mr. Stanton was about to open the door, when Dr. Sears grasped his hand hastily, saying: "Mr. Stanton, that is unanswerable; and I haven't a word to say, except that I am beginning to see the vision too, and wonder why I didn't see it before. You will hear from me again, after I have had time to adjust my eyes to the light."

Mr. Harden said nothing but "Good morning"; but as soon as the door had closed behind their pastor, he turned about with a dogged, unconvinced look on his face, saying: "Well, I never expected to see you two men floored as easily as that. The parson's argument was plausible enough, but just think what it would lead to. A man would have to consider, every time he wanted to buy a cigar, whether Christ would do it or not. It's perfectly absurd. No one would ever get ahead in business or society on that principle. The kingdom of Christ is not a thing of meat and drink; doesn't the Bible say something of that sort? I've given myself to him, and I don't see why I should have to give all my money, too."

"Well, Harden, you're certainly in your last ditch when you'll say a thing like that. That's what I call plain crawling, if you'll pardon my

the treasury, but the abiding and blessed realization of the presence of him who sat over against the treasury."

"I am a little uncertain who would most naturally fall to me for a first attempt," said Mr. Austin, "though I think possibly it should be my own brother, Samuel. I should decidedly prefer to lay hold of some one else, for my brother has already laid hold of me pretty vigorously, in his amazement that I could be so 'carried away by a dream,' as he expresses it, and that I could give my consent to 'Harry's spoiling his career' by becoming a foreign missionary. I rather think I have as tough a proposition as any of you; but I'm not going to flinch. My brother is a Christian all right; but he's very near-sighted, yet doesn't like to put on glasses because 'they're not natural.'"

"Well, friends, thus far I feel rather left out of this business, because of my absence on those eventful days," sighed Elder Gilbert, "but what you have told me, and what I have seen here to-night, are the next best thing, and I am ready to join in heartily in all the new plans. You will have to give me the same opportunity that you have had to think over the personal bearings of these new thoughts and convictions. As you know, I am by no means a rich man, but this much is certain, that heretofore the poorest and meanest thing about me has been my interest in taking or sending to other men that which I had

declared was the greatest thing in all the world to me. To think that my Lord and Saviour gave his life so unreservedly, so willingly, for me! Yet the farthest thing from my thought has been the idea of giving my life, or even many of its fruits, to him. I have thanked him for what he has given, yet I have never heard his instructions, 'Occupy till I come,' or perhaps I would better say, I have taken that word 'occupy' in a very different sense from that in which he intended it. To me it has meant 'take possession and use for yourself,' instead of 'take it in trust and use it for me.' It is no excuse for this to say that nine-tenths of the Christians of my acquaintance have been doing the same thing. I ought to have known better. Henceforth, I shall give at least a tenth of my income to beneficence; and I rather think it will be considerably more, especially in view of past delinquencies. And what is more, I want to do my full share in opening the eyes of other Christians to this most vital truth which has been brought home to us, for I do believe that the trouble is not so much a deliberate unwillingness to do the will of God, as it is a sad failure to comprehend that will through lack of information so presented as to command attention. This is very largely the fault of the officers of the church, who, if they only had had the vision themselves, would adopt far better methods for educating and inspiring the church. We have had missionary societies in the church for years; the

ladies have done nobly nearly all that has been done; the Christian Endeavor Society and the Sunday school have given something, though rather blindly; but our various organizations are not so coördinated as to be really effective. If the various departments of the business house with which I am connected were operated as independently as the various missionary interests of our church, the stockholders would never see any dividends. An idea has suggested itself to me as I've been sitting here. I believe that it lies with us to change all this by introducing a sort of missionary clearing house plan, a general missionary committee for the whole church, appointed by and responsible to the session as the ecclesiastical governing board, yet representative of every benevolent organization of the church. Suppose we ask our pastor to call a meeting of the session, some evening this week or next, to discuss such a proposition, and also to decide on any other plans which our Master may suggest to us between now and then. As the clerk of the session, I will volunteer to bring the matter to Mr. Stanton's attention, if such be your wish."

All the other members having heartily assented to the proposal, and expressed their delight that Elder Gilbert also had come into such cordial sympathy with them, Mr. Gilbert added: "You have all accepted a personal responsibility for some one else who has not yet seen what we have seen. I shall take, as my special object of effort,

William Stowell, the broker. Now you needn't all smile so incredulously, as much as to say, 'Can any good thing come out of Wall Street?' I do not deny that I shall have my hands full; and I do not pretend to any intimacy with the ways even of our local Wall Street; but I know my man pretty well, and am as sure as can be that he is a Christian man. Where there's life there's hope, for it stands to reason that any man who has himself tasted of the redeeming love of God in Christ will desire to have all the world taste that love, if the proposition is only set before him in the right way. When I came here this evening, I should no more have thought of trying to convert William Stowell to an interest in missions than I should have thought of attacking the leopard's spots with Ivory Soap, but I do not mean to attempt anything alone in future, and that makes all the difference."

Just at this point there came a tap on the door. On opening it, Mr. Austin saw several of the ladies arrayed for the street, and gently inquiring whether their respective husbands had any intention of going home that evening. The gentlemen looked at their watches and exclaimed at the discovery that it was already past ten o'clock.

"Well, ladies, you will appreciate that this has been a momentous occasion," said Elder Austin, "when you learn that we have organized a 'Presbyterian Elders' Reform Club,' and, as the

initiatory rite, have with one consent forever renounced the goddess 'Nicotine.'"

"Glory, Hallelujah!" fervently ejaculated Mrs. Ogden, while all the other ladies radiantly added "Amen."

"But that was merely incidental and introductory to the main business of the evening," continued their host. "Brother Gilbert also has seen the vision; and every member of the session has selected a fellow-member of his acquaintance for whom to labor and pray very specially, that there may eventually be none in our church out of sympathy with our new spirit, and failing to share in the blessings which have come to us. We have chosen Messrs. Harden, Seward, Weatherby, Judge Melrose, Broker Stowell and Brother Samuel Austin."

"Why, how strange!" exclaimed Mrs. Preston. "That is just exactly what we have been doing, and our lists are not very different, either. We have chosen Mrs. Harden, Mrs. Seward, Mrs. Melrose, Mrs. Sears, Mrs. Walker and Miss Greene. We certainly must have been moved by one spirit. And we have been doing something else, also. Mrs. Stanhope suggested that now that the men of the church were becoming so interested, there ought not to be the least feeling on the part of us women that the leadership in mission work was being taken out of our hands, or would be if we in any way joined hands with the men in this work. We all felt that the new spirit which has

come into the church would surely express itself in the most cordial coöperation of every missionary agency in the church; and we wondered if we might not take the initiative in this matter, and prove that these are our sentiments, by suggesting to the session the formation of a representative committee to coördinate all our activities."

"Truly the Lord is in this place!" exclaimed Elder Wentworth. "The very last thing we did was to agree to request Mr. Stanton to call a meeting of the session for the very purpose of forming such a committee. We couldn't have struck out much more nearly the same path if we'd had a joint session. It just serves to illustrate again the blessedness of having the Great Unifier as the personal companion of every one of us. 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.'"

CHAPTER III

A MISSIONARY COMMITTEE

ON the morning following this interesting social meeting of the elders and their wives the Reverend John Stanton was called up on the telephone, at quite an early hour, and found himself addressed by Mrs. Stowell, the lady who had so stirred the meeting of the first Wednesday evening by her confession of absorption in social life.

"Will it be possible for me to have a half hour of your time, some time to-day, Mr. Stanton?" she asked. "I know that you are very busy; but, after what I said in the meeting the other evening, I am sure that you will regard my call as of some importance, and I have tried to get it in early. Could you come over here some time this afternoon to see me?"

"Yes, Mrs. Stowell, I shall be very glad to come. Will four o'clock suit your convenience?"

"Perfectly, thank you. So I shall expect you. Good-by."

Mr. Stanton had been wondering for some days what was to be the outcome of that strange, impassioned speech of the Wednesday evening, so that he went to meet the appointment of the afternoon with no little curiosity and some trepidation. Yet, assured of his Master's presence,

he felt that he would be given the right words to say. He soon found, however, that very few words on his part were necessary. He was greatly surprised at the changed appearance of Mrs. Stowell, in whom formerly he had found little to attract. The change from the self-centered to the Christ-centered life had, even in this short time, truly transfigured the always handsome but formerly frivolous face; and the pastor was fairly startled at the blossoming out of a latent capacity for Christian leadership and sacrifice which he had never suspected. Impulsive by disposition, she seized both his hands in hers, and, looking frankly into his face, she said:

"I thank you so much for coming. I meant to ask you days ago; but until yesterday afternoon I was not able to complete the arrangements which I wished to make first. And I am rather glad that it is so, for every one of these days has brought me so many new joys that I can make you all the more welcome now, and rejoice your heart with a still better story of what God has done for me. Some of my old friends have come in, looking as if they had come to attend my funeral, or watch with one of those 'horror thrills' while I sacrificed my children to Moloch; and I have had to laugh at them, for I never in my life felt less like dying, nor less as if I were burning up my treasures or sacrificing my children. These friends think that I have

taken up a new fad, one which they do not approve at all; and they are out of all patience with me because they can't get me out to their bridge parties or the theater. But, I tell you, Mr. Stanton, just now at least, I have something which interests me far more than those things. How it will be after a while I would hardly dare to say; but I have a peculiar feeling of distaste for them. I have seen so much of the emptiness of them, and their fearful waste of time and money—to say nothing of morals—that I should not weep if I never went again. Perhaps I shall feel that I have to, some day, in order to try to help some of those friends to better things; but, do you know, Mr. Stanton, I've been wondering whether, after all, you can ever save your friends from Sodom by staying with them in Sodom? Now, perhaps that is pretty strong language to use about those things in which I used to find my satisfaction; but it wasn't the site of Sodom, nor the fertility of its plain, nor the abundance of its wealth and beauty, that made it a byword forever, and made it necessary for Lot to flee for his life and look not behind. No; it was what the men of Sodom were living for that made coming out the only hope of a true man. And that is just the trouble with that social world in which I have been living; it is living for self and for this life only.

"But that was not what I started out to tell you," continued Mrs. Stowell; "it was about the

result of my resolution to set free my locked-up missionaries. It will not surprise you to learn—what I wish I need not report—that I have received no sympathy from my husband in the matter. That has been the one sad element in my experience. He was not present when I spoke at the church; but I felt it my duty to tell him at once of my intention. He did not attempt to control my actions in any way, because my fortune is quite independent, an inheritance from my father; but he used every argument to dissuade me, and secured my promise to do nothing until after a month's deliberation. My plans are all made, however, and I am so sure of my purpose that I think you ought to know what I have in view. In confidence, as my pastor, I want to give you the details. They won't weary you too much, will they?"

"Whatever you feel inclined to tell me, Mrs. Stowell, will be both a matter of interest and of sacred confidence, I assure you."

"Well, of course, the surroundings of my home, and the far more than abundant clothing which I now have, are things for which I am not alone responsible, nor can I well do anything but continue to make use of them. But I have far more jewelry than I can ever possibly use. Whatever articles have been given me by my husband I could not think of disposing of; and the same is true of gifts from friends. But much has been handed down to me, or purchased by myself.

Those heirlooms which have particularly tender or historical associations I hardly feel justified in parting with. Now, just for my gratification, Mr. Stanton, make a guess as to how much, in the way of precious stones and pearls and jewelry, I have left after all these classes are taken out!" And she laughed with a child's delight.

"I fear I shall not make a very good guesser in such a matter as that," laughed back the minister; "but, just to gratify you, I will make a big guess—one thousand dollars."

"Ha, ha! I thought you could do better than that, Mr. Stanton! Now don't faint when I tell you that those who have appraised these jewels offer me eighty thousand dollars in hard cash for them. You don't wonder now that I needed a safe-deposit box for them, do you? And there most of them have lain for years, not even drawing interest, like the talent wrapped in the napkin. When I decided to sell them, I couldn't help thinking of that old suggestion made to one of the popes, with regard to the silver statues of the Twelve Apostles, 'It would be much better to melt them down and send them out, like their Master, to preach the gospel and do good.' That is what my jewels are to do henceforth, please God. As to the income of my father's estate, I will only say that it is far more than I have ever been able to spend in legitimate ways. As long as my husband lives, and is not in sympathy with me in this matter,

I have concluded that I would better not touch the principal, though I would gladly do so. But a large share of the income each year I shall give to the benevolent work of the church, and to what I may wish to do privately. I think you may safely count on me for one thousand a year for foreign missions, and another thousand to be divided among the other boards of the church. As to that eighty thousand, I have been thinking a good deal of the best use to put it to. If I had been in the habit of giving to home missions in the past, I should give it all to foreign missions on account of the immeasurably great need; but as I have never given anything worth mentioning to either, I think I will divide, just as I suggested with regard to my income. That will give forty thousand to the foreign work; and I should like to have it go into some building, which I can think of as my living safe-deposit vaults, training the native Christians for the evangelization of their own people. It doesn't seem as if any other work in the world would do more for the world. The other half I wish you would divide among the other boards according to your judgment of their relative needs. I had no idea how good it was going to feel to have a part in establishing schools and colleges and building churches for other people, and educating the young men without means, and publishing good literature, and supporting the ministers and pensioning those who have worn themselves out in the service; nor

how far a little money would go in these directions. I never half enjoyed my money before. First thing you know, Mr. Stanton, you will hear me asking for some poor people to visit, or some sick people to take riding in my automobile. I don't think you fully realize what an amount of future trouble you made for yourself by telling us of that dream of yours! But at any rate it has made very happy one woman who was suffering from ennui."

Mr. Stanton went his way, marveling in his heart over the present power of the realized Christ. He had not reached his own door before he met Elder Gilbert, whose enthusiastic greeting quite took him by surprise, as he had heard no report of the previous evening.

"I was just looking for you, Mr. Stanton, to tell you several pieces of good news, and to offer a suggestion from the session. We were very sorry that you could not be with us last night; but we had the best time we ever had together. You know I have been away from home, so have missed all these wonderful things. But the brethren shared them with me last night, and I too have seen the vision and am another man. The whole thing started with Austin offering his choice cigars, as he always does; and I was the only man who took one. Explanations were in order, and Father Stanhope and Ogden told us about their new conviction that their money had not been given them to burn; and before we were

through we all joined hands and agreed to give it up. Then I had to learn all about the new spirit in the church, and I got my share. Then we decided to pick a man each, of those who have not come around, and win him. Finally we agreed to ask you to call a meeting of the session this week or next, for the appointment of a representative missionary committee, to coördinate all our benevolent work. And when we got through we found that the ladies had been doing almost the same things in another room—except the cigars. But any one could see they were mightily pleased with our Reform Club."

"Well, Brother Gilbert, you quite take my breath away with all these good things. You men have never known how I regretted the fact that all but one of my elders used tobacco. I congratulate both you and the church with all my heart, as I see that you have indeed seen the vision. Tell me whom you have all chosen for special effort, and I will join you in prayer for them. As for the session meeting, by all means let us have one after the prayer meeting on Wednesday evening. There will be no need for a special call, as every elder who can attend the prayer meeting is sure to be there."

Mr. Gilbert gave him the names chosen by the elders and their wives; then each went his way.

As anticipated, every elder was in his place at the prayer meeting the following evening. A

blind stranger would certainly have thought that the Lord Jesus Christ must be visibly present to those who took part in the meeting; and they were many, old and young, men and women, each with some grateful testimony as to recent blessing, or word of simple, earnest prayer for fuller spiritual attainment. The prayer of intercession, definite, individual, had come in as the natural expression of the heart longing that others might share in the blessing. Elder Gilbert told of his experience; Dr. Sears related his, and Elder Austin created a profound impression by his story of what had occurred at his home on the Monday evening. The hour was all too short, and the session had to withdraw to another room to secure a quiet place for their meeting. The pastor voiced briefly their desire for guidance:

"Thou Great Head of the church, thou hast already given us the assurance that thou art with us. As those whom thou hast honored by making us coworkers with thee and with thy Son Jesus Christ, we accept thy promise of infinite wisdom as we plan together for the interests of this church and of thy kingdom throughout the world. As the governing body of this church we thank thee that thou hast made us of one heart and one mind through our new acquaintance with thee. If this plan for the appointment of a representative missionary committee be of thee, make thou for us the selection of those best fitted for these responsible duties, and fill them, one and

all, with thy spirit and with thy passion for souls. In the Master's name, Amen."

"Well, brethren," said the pastor to his session, "I am delighted to see that you are ahead of your pastor in planning for the expansion and the permanence of the work which has been begun among us. I am altogether agreed with you that we need to coördinate all our benevolent work, and ought to provide some means of enlisting every member in the work as a whole; and I also believe that a committee representative of organizations already in existence will be much better than a new organization, or than the assuming of these responsibilities by the session itself. What is your judgment as to the manner in which the committee should be constituted?"

"It seems to me," said Elder Stanhope, "that our pastor ought to be the chairman of the committee, in order to insure regular meetings and systematic activity."

"I thank you for the compliment, Mr. Stanhope; but, in my opinion, all the other members of the committee would feel a larger sense of responsibility and do better work if the pastor were not the chairman. He might be ex officio a member of the committee, but keep in the background as much as possible. Suppose we let the committee select its own chairman. But the pastor being only ex officio a member, the session, as the chief benevolent organization in the church, should be represented by one of our

frankness. What answer do you suppose our old friend, Colonel Dalford, made to a man who said that to him one day? He turned around on him and said, 'If I were the Lord, I'd say to you, "ten per cent off for cash".'" And leaving Mr. Harden to recover from the shock, Dr. Sears and Deacon Thorne took their departure. Outside the door they separated with a warm hand grasp and a look which meant a new sympathy in the closer fellowship with the Master begun that morning. As for Mr. Harden, cut to the quick by the last word of Dr. Sears, unable to find just cause for offense in his plainness of speech, yet unwilling to admit the disingenuousness of his own speech and the exceeding aptness of the retort, the banking hours of that day were comfortable neither for him nor for his associates in the bank, who were not accustomed to seeing their president so distraught.

CHAPTER II

A MISSIONARY SESSION

A DAY or two after this eventful conversation in the office of Banker Harden, the session of Westminster Church met informally on invitation of Elder Austin, at his home on Grant Avenue. The pastor was unable to be with them on this occasion, but was not sorry that circumstances had prevented his attending the meeting, for he felt that it was exceedingly desirable that these men should confer with the utmost freedom among themselves with regard to the present and future significance of the events which had so stirred them and the church. Moreover, on the principle that pastors may come and pastors may go, but sessions go on forever, he desired greatly that they should see and accept their great responsibility for the direction of the church in these matters of beneficence, whatever might be the decision as to his own future relation to the church. And, heartily as they desired his company, the elders themselves were glad of the opportunity, the first they had secured, to talk freely among themselves. The elders' wives had also been invited to dinner, which proved the most informal and delightful social gathering they had ever enjoyed. At about eight o'clock the elders withdrew to the library, while the ladies found

quite as much to talk about in the parlor. Elder Austin passed his fine Havana cigars, but was surprised at the small demand. "Stanhope! Preston! what's the matter?" he cried. "I never knew you to refuse a good cigar before, or to be slow about providing them in your own homes, either. Wentworth, I knew, never felt that he could afford to smoke, and he was too proud to accept what he couldn't buy. Here are Ogden and Gilbert, the only ones to keep me company. What, Ogden too refuses? You don't often get a better smoke than these 'Perfectos.' I don't care for the ordinary sorts myself, but I call these cheap at fifteen dollars a hundred." And hardly knowing whether or not to follow the example of Mr. Gilbert and light a cigar, Elder Austin put the box on the table and sat down. Elder Gilbert was the sixth member of the session, and, like Deacon Thorne, had been absent from town during the momentous days. On his return he had learned of what had occurred, and was not unsympathetic, but had not yet come under the transforming inspiration of the movement.

The venerable Elder Stanhope relieved the awkwardness of the situation by apologizing for any apparent lack of appreciation of their host's hospitality, and remarked: "Pray believe that I am not speaking in criticism of our host or of anyone else, or trying to decide questions for anyone else. Having used tobacco freely, and without apparent injury to myself, ever since

I was a boy, I don't suppose the question of giving it up at my age would ever have occurred to me, had it not been for those extraordinary figures of Mr. Ralph Jackson, on Foreign Mission Sunday. They fairly haunted me, and I tried to persuade myself that they were not true. Of course they were given in round numbers; but when I came to look up the details, and discovered that our own country spent more than two billion dollars for wines and liquors and one billion for tobacco during the past year, while it gave only about twelve millions for the evangelization of the world, I began to take notice. As you know, I have always been a total abstainer from intoxicating liquors; and I have often noticed sadly the number of saloons along our streets. But it so happened that the next time I went down town, the signs that stared me in the face all read, 'Tobacco,' 'Cigars,' and I was amazed to note one, two, three, even four stores in a block, selling nothing else, while the corner drug store was also stocked with the same goods. Those signs, most of them, had a red background with white letters, and as it was evening, they shone out brilliantly. I closed my eyes, but it seemed as if those two words, 'Tobacco,' 'Cigars,' in red and white, had been seared upon my eyeballs. Playing in the streets were boys of ten and twelve, puffing away at cigarettes, and I met a theater party, the women as well as the men hard at it. Up high in the air over the Columbia building shone

brilliantly over the whole town the monstrous electric sign, 'Egyptian Deities Cigarettes'; and, thought I to myself, 'American Deities would be even more appropriate.' I turned about and hastened home. I tried to read, but my mind kept working away, 'a billion for tobacco, a billion for tobacco; nearly twelve dollars apiece for every man, woman and child in the United States. Probably more than half of them do not smoke; that is twenty-five dollars apiece for those who do, or fifty cents a week. And all the Presbyterian Church needs to meet its responsibility toward the non-Christian world is five dollars a member, or ten cents a week, 'the price of a good cigar.' In other words, if only one in every five of the members of the Presbyterian Church used tobacco, and should transfer his tobacco money to the Board of Foreign Missions, the six million dollars a year required to meet our responsibility would be in hand, and the other four-fifths of the church could give their money to home missions, or to helping the other churches to meet their responsibility. How about my twenty-five dollars? Well, I have not smoked many fifteen-cent cigars, but I have bought chiefly ten-cent cigars and some five-cent ones. I have not averaged more than three a day, which I know is light, and I suppose they have cost me twenty-five cents a day, which is one dollar and seventy-five cents per week and ninety-two dollars and seventy-five cents per year. Including extras,

it was every bit of one hundred dollars. I did not have to give any attention whatever to the question of physical harm, on which so much stress is laid now by physicians, of example to children, of offensiveness to ladies, though I am compelled to admit that the average smoker loses steadily in gentlemanly regard for the comfort of others, —that simple financial fact, when brought up against the world's great need, at home and abroad, led me to regard smoking as a luxury in which I had no right to indulge, in which I knew that my Master would not indulge, if he were here in the flesh. I had not realized what a mastery the habit had obtained with the years, but grace has been given, and I am free."

"That was, indeed, an interesting and moving experience of yours, Brother Stanhope," said their host, who had held his unlighted cigar during the greater part of the speech, and finally laid it on the table. "But is there not danger in your line of argument? Did not our Lord, who, you think, would not smoke tobacco, drink wine when he was on earth, a form of indulgence which we regard as more dangerous and more expensive?"

"Are you perfectly sincere, Brother Austin, in advancing that question, or are you half joking? I surely do not need to inform you that the wine which our Lord drank was a common, inexpensive article of daily food, and not a luxury at all, or dangerous, as the Jews were accustomed to drink it," replied Mr. Stanhope.

"I do not know whether you sober, elderly fathers and brethren will believe it or not," spoke up Lawyer Ogden, "but dear old Elder Stanhope's experience wasn't a circumstance to mine. As we want to get to other business, I'll make a long story short by telling you that ever since I've had the means to afford it, as the saying is, I have smoked an average of ten cigars a day, and some cigarettes thrown in. I used to smoke more cigarettes, and my cigars cost but five cents each. But for the last two or three years my tobacco has cost me very close to a dollar a day. The first few days after our wonderful Sunday, I cut it in halves and promised the saving to missions; but it wouldn't do. Then I cut it in halves again; but the more I thought of facts such as Elder Stanhope has been giving us to-night, the more I felt that, as with wine, the time had come when the only effective Christian protest was not moderation but total abstinence. Then, too, I found I hadn't it in me to offer Christ a cigar or to ask him for a light and puff away two or three New Testaments or two days' board of a native student into smoke. I knew it was injuring my own health, making me nervous and irritable; but that was not my reason for quitting. My heavenly Father never put three hundred and sixty-five dollars a year into my hands to be burned up and fly away in smoke wreaths. Pray understand, Elder Austin, that I am not criticising you; my unheard-of refusal of a good cigar had

to have an explanation, that was all. I have given it to you."

James Ward Gilbert had been looking from one to another of his fellow-elders during this conversation, at first with a most quizzical expression on his face, taking an occasional appreciative puff at the "Perfecto"; but with less and less frequency, until an inch or more of ash had accumulated, which he knocked off. Then he pressed the end of the cigar in the dish, extinguishing it. When Lawyer Ogden had finished, he, for the first time, raised his voice: "Talk about Rip van Winkle! The changes which he found on awaking after twenty years aren't in it with the revolution that has taken place here in the two weeks I've been away! I heard that there had been great doings in Jaconsett and especially in our church; and when I find that Ned Ogden has completely cut out tobacco inside of ten days, I'm quite ready to believe it. Has the millennium come, friends? or what has happened? I'm almost persuaded to give up tobacco myself; but I can't believe that any anti-tobacco crusade has done all this; indeed, I judge from what you have been saying, that it is something far more radical than that. Even if it is a bit hard on a man's self-indulgence, it sounds good, and I want you to let me inside just as soon as possible."

Dear old Elder Wentworth's face had been beaming all this time, but he had not said a word. Indeed, he had hardly had a chance to do so.

But now he said eagerly: "You are quite right, Brother Gilbert; we have not gathered here to discuss the tobacco question; probably no one had a thought of its emergence, and it was only the unusual refusal of one form of Brother Austin's bountiful hospitality which called forth the explanation. Indeed we shall be only too glad to let you inside at the earliest possible moment. Jesus Christ has come to Westminster Church; that's all, Brother Gilbert; and has shown himself after so many infallible proofs that we no longer fail to realize that he is here, in this room, in our homes and our offices, as well as in the church; and we have been trying to square our thinking and our living and our talking and our giving with that great fact of his living presence. Our pastor had a wonderful dream on the Saturday night, and saw Jesus in the flesh, with him in the pulpit and sitting over against the treasury; and when he told us about it, it was so real that he was sitting there over against the treasury for each one of us as we made our offerings on quite a new basis. Ah, it was a great day! and the Sunday night and the Wednesday night were all of a piece. Our people gave and gave until they actually seemed to enjoy giving; and our Lord looked more and more happy over it, seeing our elders and Deacon Ransom, and Ralph Jackson and James Waterson, just on fire for missions, and our young lawyers and doctors and theological students offering themselves to go as

missionaries; I just knew it was warming his heart toward us. And I hear that our pastor has been to see Deacon Thorne, who was away, and Dr. Sears and Mr. Harden; and the deacon and the doctor have seen the vision. But poor Mr. Harden, he just won't open his eyes. He says we may put him out of the church, but he won't give a cent for foreign missions. From all I can hear, it's just a plain case of resisting the Spirit, who's been striving hard with him. I don't believe we can do a better thing, as a session, than to pray much for him and the few others who are just cutting themselves off from the blessing which has been coming to the rest of us. Our pastor, though he now has the strength of ten, can't do it all; and if we can help him to bring this whole church in line, we'll have a real foretaste of heaven here."

Elder Austin had been sitting listening, yet deep in meditation of his own. At length he spoke, in a tone of sadness yet of resolution: "Friends, you remember on that memorable Sabbath evening, that I was moved as I never was moved before, and spoke with an intensity of feeling, and an abandon, at which you all marveled. From a man who did not believe in foreign missions, I had been transformed, in a day, into a foreign mission enthusiast, so that I went so far as to say that from that time forth I proposed to give to the work of missions at least as much as I spent on myself and family. I

thought I had gone the whole length of duty and my responsibility, and that, if I was giving as much as I was spending, I was loving my neighbor as myself, and that no more could be asked of me. I forgot that the motive to missions is not merely love for one's neighbor, and that the rest of the command is to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind. I forgot that my Master gave not the half, but the whole, and that, in following him, not merely the part that we give, but also the part that we retain, is to be used always for his glory; and with that also we are to seek first his kingdom and his righteousness; that whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God. I had a sort of idea that if I gave the half, there would be no more questions asked about the other half, no matter how large it might be; and that, so long as I was not doing anything wrong in itself, no one would question my right to luxuries and self-indulgence. I was all wrong: I had simply said to my Master, 'Here is that seminary endowment to atone for the past, and here is as much for the work as I spend for myself for the future'; then to my soul, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry,' with never a qualm. In spite of seeing the Lord over against the treasury, and remembering his comparison of the rich men and the poor widow, it never occurred to me that what God looks at is not what a man gives but

what he keeps for himself. So much money, after all, is only so much man. It represents the labor of his past and the power of his future. Giving half the money, and saying to the Lord 'Hands off the rest,' is but half consecration. And so I've seen another vision to-night; and those luxuries which do not make me a distinctly better man, or enable me to make others better, will have to go. I wonder if we, the six elders of this church, are not ready for a unanimous resolution, as the first step in this direction, to cut out the tobacco? It certainly makes us no better men; what it costs would make some others better men."

The six men rose with one accord, joined hands in a circle, and the senior elder offered a few words of earnest prayer, that each one might welcome this second revelation of duty and privilege, that henceforth the glory of God might be considered not only in the giving, but in the very eating and drinking.

When they resumed their seats, Elder Preston remarked, with a smile, the kind of smile which had not often been seen on his face before that Sunday: "Well, brethren, this sort of Presbyterian Elders' Reform Club, with a love feast attached, wasn't written in the call of our meeting to-night, like a good many other things that have happened to us in the last few days; but I feel as if we are far better prepared for the thing for which we did come together by this frank talk and searching of hearts. I'm very sure that

there's nothing else in the world that would influence five old smokers inside of two weeks to give up their tobacco, except the vision of Jesus Christ, as constantly and personally present, and to be consulted about every item of their lives. Brother Wentworth there might have lectured and exhorted until doomsday, had he been so inclined, but it wouldn't have done a bit of good. I never had much idea before what Paul meant when he said, 'To me to live is Christ'; but I'm beginning to understand it now, and the smokers' social joys, and the money-makers' joys, simply can't hold a candle to the joys of fellowship in and with Christ, and the joys of blessing the world with the money which one makes. Strange, isn't it, that so many men,—Christian men, too,—think that man's chief end is to make money, instead of realizing that money's chief end is to make men? Yet there are hosts of men who are marred in the making of money, while I never yet heard of any money being marred in the right making of men. But now, to get down to business, there are still a very considerable number of prominent people in our church who are not set right on this matter, and are still inclined, as I used to be, to make a dollar bill for missions cover a multitude of selfishness, to say nothing of the many who do not even give the dollar. A church that's had a vision is bound to set an example to other churches also; and I believe that we elders, in our personal con-

tact with the other men of the church, can reach some whom our pastor cannot reach. Take Harden, for example; the kind of treatment that worked with Sears and Thorne has only soured him. The treatment was all right, for many men are like growing plums—they get most awfully sour in the process of growing sweet. Now, it seems to me Ogden's the man to tackle him. They've always been pretty intimate, and I think for Harden just to rub up against the new Ogden for a while will be as effective a remedy as could be found. My, but won't he stare when Ogden refuses his cigars! I'd like to see the scene. But I mustn't be assigning these hard cases to other people; I am quite ready to take one myself. There's Cal Weatherby, for example. I've known Cal rain and shine for forty years, and there's not a more generous man living, in his way. He's been a member of our church almost as long as I've known him, and he's paid his pew rent regularly. He was a teacher in the Sunday school twenty years ago; but gradually dropped out. He can't meet a beggar on the street without giving him a dime or a quarter; but I don't believe he ever gave a cent for either home or foreign missions, unless he was caught unawares in church on collection Sunday, and didn't dare let the plate pass unnoticed. What Cal needs, as some one once said, is a good acute case of 'information on the brain,' followed by an attack of 'application of the heart'; and he'll come out

all right. I'll make myself responsible for the hypodermic injections of toxin, and see if we can't get him good and sick, and then ask Dr. Sears to call round and cure him by letting a little blood into the treasury. But, joking aside, we shall find plenty of opportunities to let our new light shine; and I believe we shall see far better days in our church even than those which we have been enjoying recently."

"Suppose we see if we can't fix upon a man apiece before we separate to-night," suggested Elder Wentworth. "It won't do for me to make up to any of the very rich men, for they will think, 'It is easy enough for Wentworth to talk when he doesn't own one hundred dollars of bank stock, or any other for that matter.' There is Russell Seward, chief bookkeeper at Doran and Hutchins.' He's a very good friend of mine, and his income is, I imagine, just about what mine is. But I know one thing, that he doesn't get a tenth part of the enjoyment out of it. He dresses no better and rents no finer house. What he does with his money I don't know. That man has been a trouble of heart to me for a long time. He often seems so depressed. It was rumored a few months ago that he had attempted to commit suicide; but the matter was hushed up, and he has gone on with his work as usual. He was not at church that Sunday morning,—working at his books until one o'clock in the morning, he told me afterward, and just had to sleep late. He came

out that evening, but he had missed the beginning and did not get kindled. And he couldn't come Wednesday evening. I will take him as my special object of prayer and effort. But speaking of prayer reminds me of one thing we must not forget—that what we are after with these men is not the dollars and cents, but the life touch with the Master. When that is realized, enjoyed and steadily maintained, the money and the life service will never be lacking. I have just been thinking that the keys to God's power house are like those to the safety vaults; it takes all three, the prayer, the gifts, the service, used together, according to each man's assigned combination, to open the lock."

"There is one of my particular friends," began Elder Stanhope, with a return to his calm, dignified habit of speech, "who was among those 'who went away sorrowful' that Sunday morning, because he had 'great possessions.' Although a trustee, he has not been in the church since, and he has appeared to avoid me, as if he feared that I would add to his sorrow by some reference to the events of that day. I have been planning to get in contact with Judge Melrose, but have hesitated to force myself upon him. You may depend upon me, however, to avail myself of the first opportunity to seek to open his eyes to the understanding of that fact which Brother Wentworth has so happily expressed, that the great significance of that day was not the pouring of the money into

elders. Being already of one mind as to the forming of a committee, we hardly need to take time to-day to discuss the general plan. Who of you all is most on fire for missions?"

"If you are going to put it that way, Mr. Stanton, I think we'll all have to be members," said Mr. Odgen; "but I don't believe there's one of our number who will do better work on this committee than Brother Wentworth, for he was on fire long ago, when we were nothing but shivering icebergs."

In spite of his modest protest, Elder Wentworth was unanimously chosen to represent the session.

"What about the deacons?" asked Mr. Preston. "They are certainly one of our benevolent organizations, and surely no one could represent them better than our good 'Deacon Philip' Ransom, who, like his original, 'hasn't any finicky notions.' He'll not let the committee go to sleep while he is serving tables."

Again there was no difference of opinion, and down went the name of Deacon Ransom.

"In order to forestall any suggestion that the Sunday-school superintendent be the representative of that body on this committee,—not because I am unwilling to work, but because the superintendent has his hands full already, and because we should not have too many elders on the committee,—I want to suggest the name of my assistant, Mr. George Quincy," said Elder

Austin. "You remember how earnestly he pleaded, on that Wednesday evening, for something more than mere 'interest' in missions? He is a fine young business man, and I believe will help to secure and maintain effective business methods in our committee."

This also was regarded by all as a wise selection.

"One question occurs to me with regard to what we are doing," said Elder Gilbert. "I was about to make a nomination from the Brotherhood, when it suddenly occurred to me that they ought to have the privilege of making that nomination themselves, and that they would feel far more interest in the work of the committee if allowed to nominate, even though the actual appointment should rest with the session. So far as we have gone, I think it is all right, though we might also consult the deacons as to their representative."

"You are right, Brother Gilbert," said the pastor. "It may cause a few days' delay, but it will pay. Will you then, as our clerk, send a brief statement to the deacons, the Sunday school, the Brotherhood, the Young People's Society, and the Ladies' Missionary Society, asking each of them to nominate a representative before next Wednesday evening, when we will meet again, appoint the committee and urge an early meeting? In the meantime, let us all give thought to the functions of such a committee, so as to be able to make recommendations next week when the committee is appointed. At that time, too,

I expect to have some good news to report to you, which I am not yet at liberty to divulge. I shall not be surprised if others of you also have good things to report. Is it not simply delightful, the increased interest that is being taken in our church services, and particularly in the prayer meeting? I heard the report of a presbytery, the other day, in which only twenty-three of the fifty-six churches continue to maintain a weekly prayer meeting. What that presbytery needs is the vision which you and I have received. If they should get that, nothing could keep them from the prayer meeting."

Session adjourned to meet one week later, and again assembled at the close of the midweek meeting.

"Our clerk will make a report of the work that was committed to him last week," said Mr. Stanton.

"I am glad to be able to report for the Sunday school and the deacons just the nominations suggested last week," said Mr. Gilbert. "The Brotherhood nominates Dr. Sears, who has become as much of an enthusiast as any of us; the Young People's Society nominates Miss Gertrude Austin, the chairman of its Missionary Committee; the Ladies' Missionary Society nominates Mrs. Preston. One way or another, our session is going to be pretty well represented, I think. I move that we appoint those thus nominated as the Missionary Committee of this church,

and ask our pastor to convene the committee just as soon as possible."

The motion was carried unanimously, after which Mr. Stanton said:

"You may remember that I half promised you some good news last week. I am free to tell it now, and it is this: Mrs. Stowell meant every word she said that Wednesday night, and went right to work to unlock her missionaries. After making all reservations which loyalty to husband and friends could require, she asked me to guess how much she had to dispose of in the way of jewels, and I guessed a thousand dollars. How she did laugh as she told me that she could sell them for eighty thousand, and proposed to give half to foreign missions and half to home objects! She has just given me a check for the entire sum, with half of which I am to secure some buildings in the foreign field to act as her 'living safe-deposit vaults' by training up a native ministry. The other half I am to divide among the different boards working at home. In addition, she will contribute a thousand a year each to foreign and home missions out of her private income. And the beauty of it is that her face has become fairly radiant with the joy of it. If this great change does not contribute to the winning of her husband, he must be hard indeed."

"I had no idea," spoke up Mr. Gilbert, "when I took Mr. Stowell as my 'special object,' that I was going to have any such help, for I had not

heard of his wife's speech that evening; but when I made my first attack, I noticed something rather peculiar about him. You know what a phlegmatic temper he has. Well, he actually seemed nervous, fidgeting with his hands and averting his face. I hadn't got any farther than the weather when he broke out: 'You're not in this foolishness up at the church, are you, Gilbert? I can't imagine what's come over our people: there's no living with them any longer. First thing we know they'll be poor as poverty, after giving even the clothes off their backs to the heathen. Now, there's my wife, for example; if ever there was a woman that liked silks and satins and jewelry and gay society, it was she; and all of a sudden she turns right around; and, if it wasn't for her consideration for my feelings, I believe she would sell every blessed thing she owns and turn it into missionaries. I must admit that she has never in her life been half so nice to me as she is now, and she is quite willing to do nothing rashly. She is at home twice as much as she used to be, and she doesn't look like the same woman; but I can't fathom it. Why should an interest in missions turn everything upside down in this fashion?'

"It was some time before I could get a word in edgewise," went on Mr. Gilbert; "but then I said, 'Is it foolishness you call it, Stowell? Not to mention anything else, would you rather your wife would go back to the old ways?' 'No, I can't

say that I would,' he replied, 'for she's certainly making our home brighter, and the children think themselves in clover because their mother isn't everlastingly away at bridge parties or the theater; but tell me, what does it all mean; and are you in it, Gilbert?' 'Yes, Stowell,' I said, 'I am in it to stay in. I was absent on those interesting days when the thing began; but I got home just in time for a dinner of the elders and their wives at Mr. Austin's. What should happen after dinner but every blessed man except myself refused Austin's "Perfecto" cigars.' 'What, Ogden too?' he exclaimed. 'Yes, Ogden too; and they soon explained that our country's billion dollars for tobacco, the past year, against twelve millions for foreign missions, was more than they were willing to stand for. Before the meeting was over our session made a clean sweep of the weed, and we're all happier for it to-day. But, to answer your other question and this one together, it is not primarily a question of tobacco or jewels or society, or even of the heathen; it is a question of each man's personal relation to a living and present Saviour and Master. Once realized, that settles every question. If I think my Friend and Master, Jesus Christ, would smoke in my place, I smoke; if I think he would keep quantities of gold or jewels in cold storage, or on exhibition, I keep them; if I think he would spend his time at bridge and the theater, I spend my time at them; if I think he would let some or all of these

go, along with his precious blood to save the non-Christian world, I let them go. That's the whole thing in a nutshell, Stowell; and it has made a different man of me, just as it has evidently made a different woman of your wife.' 'Will wonders never cease?' he cried; 'it can't be James Ward Gilbert talking this way to me. If it were the dominie, now, one might expect it; but Saul is certainly among the prophets this time! But seriously, Gilbert, if it were not so utterly upsetting to the whole system of modern business and society, I should be obliged to say that your logic was pretty straight. But think what it would mean, man: the whole edifice would tumble in ruins. Poor old Wall Street would go into the hands of a receiver, and the Four Hundred would be sailing for Africa, and not for diamonds, either—unless it be black ones.' 'Well, Stowell,' I said, 'the beautiful thing about it is that a man doesn't have to take one more step along this line than he wishes to take. If a man will just accept the fact once for all, and let the fact do its own work, every overturning that it causes will be an upturning, every revolution a forward movement, and every renunciation will prove an annunciation. I have yet to hear of a man, woman or child who has accepted the fact who would now give it up for anything in the world. The best thing that ever happens to a man is to find Jesus Christ; but most of us, after finding him, thanked him for saving us from

eternal punishment, and then left him and went about our own business as if he had nothing to do with that. And all his commands and entreaties and invitations and promises have seemed to concern others, but not us. There can be no doubt that if our Master were given his own way in Wall Street, and among the Four Hundred, there would be some exciting times; but the first question for us is, are we going to let him have his own way with us?' After that I just left Stowell to himself, looking more moved than I have ever seen him. If he comes round, it will be his wife's doings."

After a prayer of thanksgiving, the session adjourned.

Two days later, on the Friday evening, the persons chosen to form the new Missionary Committee met at the manse, on invitation of the pastor. After prayer Mr. Stanton set before them the purpose of their appointment. Elder Wentworth was selected chairman; Miss Austin, secretary. The new chairman took the seat vacated by Mr. Stanton, and remarked:

"Pretty poor figurehead I'll make, I'm afraid. Now, we'll just go ahead and forget that we have any chairman while we talk over our plans about the feet of our Lord Jesus. I expect we shall find considerable to do, for a while, at least, so don't you think we would better plan for weekly meetings? We can hold them less frequently after a time, if desirable. How will Friday evenings at

one of our homes, do? Is there anyone who cannot usually come on Friday night?"

That evening was adopted as the most convenient for all, upon which the chairman remarked:

"As I understand it, the great aim of all the expanding and coördinating which our committee is to seek to do, is to give efficiency to our church's policy with reference to all its benevolent work. That policy was announced more than seventy years ago by our General Assembly, but seems to have been buried in the archives ever since, so far as our church and many others are concerned. Our chief duty, then, is to devise means to impress upon every member of the church the facts, first, that the Presbyterian Church, by its very constitution, and by the solemn and repeated declaration of its General Assembly, is a missionary society, the chief object of which is to aid in the evangelization of the world; second, that every member of the church is, therefore, a member for life of a missionary society, and bound to do all in his power for the accomplishment of this object; third, that joining with the rest of the church in the support, by prayer, by gifts, by service, of a parish abroad is as much the privilege and duty of every member of the church as is the support of the parish at home; fourth, that our giving, as an act of worship, should be, according to the Scriptures, individual, systematic and proportional. 'Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may

prosper.' When we have succeeded in convincing everyone that this is the programme of God for him, and that its carrying out, in the realization of the presence of the Master himself, is the secret of highest blessing to self and to the world, then our duty as a committee will be accomplished. Our duty is not to see how much money we can raise,—these last few weeks have taught us that that will almost take care of itself,—but to convince every man that no self-centered life is a complete or a happy life. It does my soul good to think how many have discovered this recently; and it is a great privilege which is given to us, as members of this committee, to help in bringing this joy to every last one in the church."

"Don't you think, Mr. Wentworth, that the great trouble with most people is that they don't know about the work, its needs and its opportunities?" asked Miss Austin. "I know that I myself never imagined a tenth part of the interest of it all as it has come to me these last few weeks through reading and hearing about it. And yet I have been, for more than a year, chairman of our Christian Endeavor Missionary Committee!"

"Yes, I think that is very true, Gertrude," replied the elder; "yet information is not always inspiration. There is a great deal of difference between sight and vision. Thousands of tourists, many of them Christians, go round the world every year and see 'the heathen in his blindness bow down to wood and stone'; but the only

desire awakened is to get possession, by fair means or foul, of those same images of wood and stone to carry home as curios; and they never go near the missionary to see his work, yet many of them return home to report that he is doing nothing. No; it is only when we hear what we hear with the Saviour's ears and see what we see with the Saviour's eyes that it serves for inspiration. The other is merely sight-seeing; this is vision-beholding. But what you wished to urge was the need of information, education; and it is a very primary need. What were you thinking of suggesting along that line, Gertrude?"

"My thought was that there is now such a great variety of inspiring books and pamphlets to be had that one of our chief duties should be the getting of this literature into the hands of every member of the church. Some of the leaflets might be given away; but I thought of some form of loan library for the books. Only the library will not loan itself,—at least, in the places where it is most needed. So I think that one or two of our number ought to be appointed as a literature committee, to see to the securing and diffusing of Christian missionary books."

"The same committee might greatly increase the subscriptions to 'The Missionary Review of the World,' 'The Assembly Herald,' 'Woman's Work,' 'Over Sea and Land' and 'Every Land,' and should always bear in mind that that bright little magazine, 'All the World,' is sent free to all

contributors of five dollars or more per year to the work of our foreign board," added Mrs. Preston; "and I do not believe that there is on of our number who can do this work more efficiently than the one who has proposed it. I move that Gertrude Austin be our Literature Committee." All were in favor.

"If you're going to treat in that way th eople who make suggestions," said Deacon som, "I'm going to save myself by nominating George Quincy as the Committee on Finance; and he'll have to tell us the best method of collecting our offerings, and boss the job of buttonholing every member of the church by and by with 'Your money or your life for missions.'"

"I will return the compliment by nominating 'Deacon Philip' Ransom as the Committee on the Missionary Meeting, for he can be trusted to keep everyone from going to sleep," retorted Mr. Quincy.

"I think we can hardly ask the Literature Committee to take charge of mission study, so I will suggest Dr. Sears as a special committee on that subject," said Mr. Stanton, earnestly desirous that the physician himself might search deeply in the mines of missionary lore.

"Should we not have a Committee on Correspondence, to keep us in touch with those of our young people who are going as missionaries?" suggested the chairman; "I nominate Mrs. Preston."

"And I nominate our chairman as a Committee on Prayer," said Mrs. Preston. "There is no one among us who knows more of its power, or of its vital importance to the work we are undertaking."

All were in hearty accord as to these nominations, and the appointments were made accordingly.

"This meeting was merely for organization," said the chairman. "Next week let every committee bring a report of work done and suggestions to offer. And may our ever-present Master bless us abundantly in our plan-making and our work."

A new vista of opportunity and possibility had opened before Westminster Church.

CHAPTER IV

A MISSIONARY SUNDAY SCHOOL

BEFORE the Missionary Committee had held its first meeting Elder Austin and his assistant superintendent, Mr. George Quincy, had held an earnest conversation at the office of the latter concerning the relation of the Sunday school to the new missionary interest in the church.

"It is no wonder," remarked Mr. Austin, "that those of us who are older have had little interest heretofore in the evangelization of the world, for we were not educated to it; and the only way to perpetuate the present interest is to educate our children to it. That seems axiomatic, doesn't it? Yet I don't suppose that one out of three of the Sunday schools of our church gives any attention to the subject, unless it be the perfunctory teaching of an occasional missionary lesson in the regular course. I hate to confess it, but I always used to wish that those lessons had been left out. I had no power to teach them myself, and knew that more than half our teachers felt the same way. But now I don't believe that a formal lesson once in three or six months is by any means enough. I want all the members of our school to realize that teaching people to live for others and for Christ is the great purpose of the church school; and if you

agree with me, and we can enlist the aid of the teachers, we'll have a missionary lesson every Sunday. It need not take long, never more than ten minutes, usually only five; but even though it be necessary to lengthen the school session by so much, it should be done. The children are in the day schools, training body and mind, for twenty-five to thirty hours a week, and it is a pity if they must be positively limited to one hour a week for the training of the spirit."

"I heartily agree with you, Mr. Austin," responded Quincy. "The evangelization of the world will depend very largely upon those of various ages who are in our Sunday schools to-day; and the interest of the youth, if intelligent and personal, will become passion in the adult. We must certainly see to it that no pupil goes out of our school ignorant of the great facts of the world's need and the principles of its God-planned supply, or insensible of his personal relation to that need and supply. To this end we should have constant missionary instruction, should have a large selection of missionary books in our library, and should create a missionary atmosphere in the school by mechanical as well as other means."

"You mean by that the display of maps and pictures?"

"Yes; maps, pictures, charts, banners and mottoes. There are a good many of these last to be had ready-made, I believe. Some of them,

formulated originally for adults, can easily be modified: for example, 'The resources of God are only for those who undertake the programme of God' might read 'God's promises are only for those who will carry out God's plans.' It will take quite a little money to decorate the walls of our Sunday-school room in this way; but I think it will pay many times over."

"Well, Quincy, if you will take the trouble to look up the best of these things to be found and get them, I will agree to foot the bill. As for the books, I think we would better call a meeting of the Library Committee next Sunday, and have a list of recommendations ready for them. Of course, this new feature of the library will require advertising; but I miss my guess if there is not a large demand for those books by a year from now. We ought to have books adapted to all grades, and first thing we know we shall have the adult Bible class and the young men's class taking books home to read. In all these matters, Quincy, I think we want to steer clear of one mistake. I imagine there's very little real danger of over-emphasis, but for the sake of the susceptibilities of a few people, and to make clear the oneness of the whole work, we must take pains not to confine our literature, or our charts, or our talks, to foreign missions; give home missions their full share, that our young people may understand from the beginning that to Christ there is no such distinction, for to him 'the field

is the world,' the emphasis merely to be laid on the most needy parts. I have just come to notice, for the first time, how many of those who urge the need of home missions as a reason for doing nothing for foreign missions limit their idea of home missions almost exclusively to their own local church, while fully half of them contract it still further to 'me and my wife, my son John, him and his wife, us four and no more.'"

"That's right, Mr. Austin; I met John Boyce the other day, and got to talking with him about these developments in our church. He said, 'The church is mad to be sending all this good money away to foreign lands, with millions of veritable heathen on our frontiers and in the slums of our cities.' I know the man pretty well, and could not help asking him, 'Mr. Boyce, pardon a personal question, but since you speak so enthusiastically in behalf of the people without the gospel on our frontiers, would you mind telling me how much you gave to home missions last year?' 'Why—why—why,' he stammered, 'I believe I was away from town when the collection was taken, and I don't know as I gave anything.' 'Pray do not regard me as intrusive or unfriendly,' I said, 'if I ask one more question. How much have you given during the last year for the work in the slums of the great cities, or even of our own?' 'Well, 'pon my word, Quincy, you've got me where the hair is short this morning. I haven't done anything directly for these objects;

but I've contributed for the support of the church, which reaches out a helping hand toward these people, doesn't it?' I was so indignant that I pumped him still farther, until I found out what I had suspected, that his 'support of the church' was confined to two sittings in a pew for his wife and himself; yet the man's worth every bit of half a million. He did confess to a little shame before I left him, and said, 'We'll have to look into these things, Quincy.' Poor man! He's living on husks right at the door of the Father's house."

"I suppose we shall meet with objection on the part of some of our teachers to taking time from the regular lessons," remarked Mr. Austin, nodding his head sympathetically yet sadly as he recalled his own former attitude; "so I hope that we can get the time out of the opening and closing exercises, or by prolonging the hour a few minutes. Yet we must use every means to convince teachers and pupils that the new feature we are introducing is not extra-Biblical, but, on the contrary, the very embodiment of the whole spirit and teaching of the Bible, too largely lost sight of in an attention to history and doctrine severed from their practical application, or that application narrowed by defective vision."

"Well, we'll try the effect of some 'missionary atmosphere' on that 'defective vision,'" said George Quincy, as Mr. Austin took his departure.

Every spare moment that he could bestow that week Mr. Quincy gave to the preparation of

"atmosphere," and many were the exclamations of teachers as well as pupils when they entered the Sunday-school room the next Sabbath, and their eyes were greeted with a great map of the world on one side of the room, indicating by colors all the prevailing religions, and by dots all the mission stations. On the other side of the room was another great map of the United States and her colonies, with dots to indicate all the churches, schools and colleges maintained, in whole or in part, by the various boards carrying on the different departments of the home work. There were many charts requiring study for full comprehension, which received that study before and after school for many months to come. In large, bold letters, visible from every part of the room, could be read such mottoes as these, every one supplying food for thought for a week,—or a lifetime:

"God's Promises are only for those who will carry out God's Plans."

"Christ is either Lord of all, or He is not Lord at all."

"Partial Obedience means Partial Life."

"The Whole Business of the Whole Church is to preach the Whole Gospel to the Whole World."

"Love never asks How much Must I Do, but How much Can I Do?"

"We cannot serve God and Mammon, but we can serve God with Mammon."

"The more Religion we Export, the more we Possess."

"Not how much of my Money will I give to God, but how much of God's Money will I keep for Myself?"

"The Mission of the Church is Missions."

"God had an Only Son, and He was a Missionary."

"I place no value on anything I have or may possess, except in its relation to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ."

"The greatest Foes of Missions are Prejudice and Indifference, and Ignorance is the Mother of them both."

"If I ought, I must: if I must, I will."

"If God has not free access to my Purse, Satan has."

"Not to Consecrate is to Desecrate."

"Christ still sits over against the Treasury."

Suspended wherever the light favored were photographs and prints of famous missionaries, at home and abroad, and scenes from missionary life.

It cannot be claimed that the teachers were able to hold the undivided attention of their classes that day. The matter had been, perhaps, overdone; and had it been done over again, the "missionary atmosphere" might have been introduced by degrees, lest it prove too exhilarating. The superintendent admitted as much when he called the school to order at the close of the lesson study, and thus addressed them:

"Members of the Sunday school, older and younger, I can see that we have almost taken your breath away to-day with all our new maps and

charts and pictures and mottoes; and I am not sure but we owe an apology to your teachers for drawing away considerable attention from the lesson. If so, I trust that the other lesson taught you all by these new adornments of our walls may more than make up for the distraction. These things are not just on exhibition for one day, but are to stay here, for this is no more missionary Sunday than every other Sunday is to be. There is not one of you too young to know something about the change that has come over our church during the last few weeks, and most of you know the reason: we are all trying to live just as we believe we should live if our Lord Jesus Christ were close by our side, morning, noon and night, constantly seen by our eyes and heard by our ears, and we could feel the pressure of his hand. Instead of trying to take him along wherever we want to go, or leave him behind if he does not wish to go, we ask him to take us along wherever he wishes to go. Instead of asking him to help us carry out our plans, we ask him to make us strong to help him carry out his plans, for, as this motto right up here over the platform says, 'God's promises are only for those who will carry out God's plans.' We all want his promises, don't we, especially that one, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world'? Do you remember to what people that promise was made? It was made to his disciples just after Jesus had said to them, 'Go ye into all the world,

and preach the gospel to the whole creation.' Did he promise to be with them if they would not go? No; and so we feel sure that we must either ourselves be going to those who do not have the gospel of Jesus, or, if we cannot go ourselves, must be giving all we can to help others to go, and praying for the success of their work. Then we shall be carrying out God's plans, and may with assurance expect him to carry out all his promises to us.

"Now we older people do not want you boys and girls ever to be so foolish and ignorant and wrong as we have been, and to miss so many of these precious promises; so we are going to have these things here for you to look at, are going to put into the library some of the most interesting books that you have ever read, and are going to take five or ten minutes every Sunday to help you to understand and love the greatest work in the world. You know there are several in our school who are planning to become missionaries, and I am going to ask one of them, Dr. Corson, to plan for the best use of our missionary minutes next Sabbath."

The school was dismissed after a missionary hymn and the Lord's Prayer, with such strong emphasis on the first sentences of that prayer that some were startled to discover that it was a missionary prayer. So interesting proved the new wall hangings that it was long before the room was deserted. The superintendent, walk-

ing a few blocks with his assistant and Dr. Corson, remarked:

"I have been amazed at the wealth of suggestion as to 'Missionary Methods for Sunday-School Workers' contained in a little book by that name, which I have just run across, written by the Sunday-school secretary of our foreign board. It will fill our missionary moments for years. I'll pass it on to you for the week, Dr. Corson, though I imagine you will not need much suggestion this time."

Gertrude Austin and Grace Wentworth walked home together as usual, talking animatedly of the impression made by the new "atmosphere." Their class of thirteen girls, from sixteen to eighteen, had voted to meet at the Austin home on Saturday afternoon, to consider their relation to the new order.

"Oh, I do hope they'll all come!" said Grace, who had inherited her father's enthusiasm and unselfishness. "Did you see Lena Harden, Gertrude? She listened with all her ears to what your father was saying at the close of school; and all through the lesson hour, while she answered questions all right, I could see her looking every now and then at that motto over the desk, which your father used as a text. My, but wouldn't Lena make a fine missionary, though, if she once got the missionary spirit!"

"Indeed she would," responded Gertrude heartily; "but it will take more than a motto

to give Lena Harden the missionary spirit; and then, you know, her father wouldn't listen to it for a minute. She's going to Wynmar College this fall, and when she's through she will surely be a professor somewhere, if she does not marry some man of wealth and position. A few weeks ago I should have felt that Lena was altogether too bright and attractive to go as a missionary; but I am going to tell you, Grace, what I haven't told a soul yet, not even father: that if my brother Henry were not planning to go to the foreign field, I should go myself."

"Why, Gertrude Austin, you don't surely mean it! Somehow, dear and sweet as you are, I never thought you would feel that you could leave your beautiful home to go so far, and for life. Now with me it's different: I have always been accustomed to plain living and planning and patching; and I'd just love to go; but with mother a half invalid the past year, and half-a-dozen younger brothers and sisters to look after, I have a louder call, for the present, at least."

"My duty is not quite so plain as yours, Grace, for father and mother are both strong and well, and there are no younger children to look after; but Henry and I are all father and mother have; and I have seen something of what it means to them to think of letting Henry go; so I don't feel as if it would be right even to mention the matter to them now. And I am only eighteen, and have three years more in college; so I am going to keep

my little secret from everyone but you for a long time to come. Pray for me, dear, that I may know God's will very clearly."

"I will indeed, Gertrude; and we must both pray for Lena and the rest of the class. I am just eager to have Saturday come, for I am sure more than one unexpected thing will happen," replied Grace, as she turned down a side street and was soon at home and singing at the work of setting on the table the simple Sunday lunch for six hungry boys and girls younger than herself, as well as for father and mother.

Saturday came at length, and with it every last one of the thirteen girls, to the surprise and gratification of Grace and Gertrude. And they were all prompt, which was even more remarkable. For several years the class had maintained an organization of its own; for two years Gertrude Austin had been the president and Grace Wentworth the secretary. In its meetings, however, there was little observance of parliamentary rules, nor had the organization any distinct object, save to cultivate an *esprit du corps* and to make more natural their frequent gatherings. Some of the closest friendships among them, as in the case of Gertrude and Grace, were between girls upon very different social levels. There were, besides Lena Harden, Gertrude and Grace, Alice Stanhope and Julia Marsh, the former the daughter of a multimillionaire, the latter of a poor clerk; yet the two were almost

inseparable at school or at home: they were but sixteen; the Preston twins, Caroline and Catharine, seventeen years old, were full of fun and always to be found together; Beatrice Stowell, strikingly like her mother in face and manner; Constance Ogden, the youngest member of the class, not quite sixteen; Anna Sears, short and plump like her father; Mary Ransom, quite unlike her father, the deacon, petite and quiet; Helen Talbot, daughter of a popular druggist, and Margery Wilson, the only child of the sexton of the church, completed the circle, which rather prided itself on numbering thirteen. Their dispositions were as varied as their social conditions.

When the meeting had been called to order by the president, she said, with some evident diffidence, yet with conviction: "Girls, at our meetings we have never been in the habit of opening with prayer, perhaps because our business has usually been of a kind which didn't seem worth praying about. It is different to-day, and if you don't mind, we will just bow our heads for a minute." Silently all heads were bowed, and then Gertrude said: "Dear Father in heaven, we have almost all acknowledged thee as our Father, and Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Master; and yet somehow we have not realized how much that acknowledgment meant. We fear that we have often thought of thee as only in heaven, and of thy Son as having completed his work on earth and now away off there at

thy right hand. And so the things which our eyes see and our hands handle have been the chief interests of our lives; and our following of Jesus has been little more than keeping from great sins, going to church and Sunday school, helping with church suppers and other entertainments, and taking part in Christian Endeavor meetings. We do not need to tell thee for thou knowest all about it; and even yet we do not know ourselves very well. But oh! we do want something better! We cannot be satisfied till every one of our class loves Jesus with her whole heart; and then we want, every one of us, to be so filled with the love of Jesus, and with the vision of Jesus as nearer and dearer than any earthly friend, that the one constant, joyful, determining question shall be, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' We have come here to-day to ask that question, and to be made willing to follow Jesus whithersoever he goes. In his name we ask it. Amen."

The girls had all heard Gertrude Austin offer a few words of prayer in the young people's meeting without emotion; but these few sentences, so simple, so genuine, so contrite and so tenderly intimate, brought tears to the eyes of some of the circle, and made an impression upon everyone.

"Now, I think," said the president, "that we ought to know one another well enough by this time to be perfectly free and informal in talking about these matters for which we have met to-day, just as we have always been in talking about

things much less important. I am sure it is not possible that the things which have taken place in our church during these last few weeks should have been entirely without influence upon us 'giddy girls,' for we are by no means altogether 'giddy.' There are only two of us who have not yet publicly taken Jesus as Lord, and I feel very sure that our circle will be complete some day in that respect, as it is in so many others. I think it would be awfully nice if we could have a regular old-fashioned testimony meeting before we do anything else, so that we can know one another's hearts. What do you say, girls?"

Beatrice Stowell had been sitting for some time shading her eyes with her hand; but at this question she rose at once to her feet, glanced about the circle with the tears shining in her eyes, and then startled her friends by saying impetuously:

"Girls, I can't wait for anyone else to speak, for almost every one of you is so far ahead of me already that I've simply got to catch up a little before you go on another step. You can't imagine what a fight I have had ever since my mother got up in church that night and talked about her 'locked-up missionaries.' You know I've never come to the Lord's Supper, though I have called myself a Christian; and the great reason has been simply that I adored the society life which I had begun to share with mother since I came out a year ago. Miss Bemis has often asked me if I did not believe on Jesus Christ and

want to let others know it, and I said, Yes; but I wasn't willing to make public confession and come to the Lord's Supper. Mr. Stanton too has asked me, and so has Gertrude there. I never had any good reason to give; but all the while I knew that there was ringing in my ears a verse from the Bible, 'Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons.' It startled me so, the first time that I noticed it, that I looked it up to see if it had any real application; and I found that it referred to the eating of food offered to idols. So I said to myself, 'You are not thinking of eating food offered to idols, so that has nothing to do with you.' But every time I thought of coming to the Lord's table, back would come that verse, and I just couldn't put it out of my mind. Well, when mother made her speech that night, I was awfully put out about it, because I foresaw at a glance that it did not mean merely that idle jewels would be disposed of for missions, but that mother wouldn't have half the old interest in society. Sure enough, she didn't; and several times I have had to go off with some friend to get what I craved. But that was not the only change I saw in mother: her very face was transfigured, her step was lighter, her voice was softer, and we children got twice the time and twice the loving from her that we ever had before. Within the last few days a change has been coming over

father, too. He was very moody for a number of days, and didn't like to have mother consult him about her new plans for the use of her money. 'Do what you like with your own, my dear,' was all she could get out of him. But the last two or three days he has actually taken an interest in these plans and offered to help her carry them out! Well, the wonder of it has been growing on me, and I have been getting nearer and nearer to the secret, until to-day, when Gertrude was offering that beautiful prayer, it all suddenly flashed over me that the verse which had haunted me had a very real application to me after all, for nine-tenths of my social life was nothing less than a feasting on the meat and drink offered to idols. There's just as real worship of Bacchus and Terpsichore, and a good many other gods, as there ever was in the past, and I have been one of the worshipers. I thank God that he did not let me come to his table. But I've had the last of the cup and the table of demons, and I shall come to the Lord's table at the first opportunity. By the feeling which I now have for you, girls, I am convinced that the society which is best worth while is that society of which our Lord Jesus is the center. Excuse me for talking so long; but I'm a new creature."

Most loving were the looks with which she was greeted as she took her seat. Giving her friends no chance to catch their breath, up jumped Anna Sears, exclaiming: "You needn't think I'm going

to be left all alone, without part or lot in this matter, girls. I just simply haven't realized its importance till the last few days. Neither papa nor mama has ever urged me to join the church, thinking, I suppose, that it would be time enough when I was through with my education and settled down somewhere. The other day, for the first time in my life, papa gathered us all together after breakfast, and said he hardly knew how to do it; we'd have to excuse his blunders; but he felt we ought to have family prayers. Mama dropped the cup she held in her hand crash on the floor; Dick and John stared as if they thought papa must have been 'struck with death,' as his family said about the old deacon in the story; but we all sat down. Papa read a chapter and then made a prayer. Just think, girls, I never before had heard my father pray, though he had been a member of the church ever since he was a boy! It wasn't what you would call an elegant prayer, but it was decidedly eloquent, I can assure you. After confessing all his own sins, he prayed for each one of us by name, that we might be kept from making his mistakes and might everyone take a stand as a faithful follower of Jesus Christ, even unto the uttermost parts of the earth. I never saw my father cry before, either; but there were sobs in his voice as he prayed and tears in his eyes when he arose; and he went to his office without another word to anyone. We didn't say anything to one

another, either. But I have been thinking ever since; and now here this afternoon, I want to tell you girls, first of all, that I have taken Jesus as my Saviour, and mean to follow him no matter where he leads me."

As if by one impulse, the other twelve girls rose to their feet, all grasped one another's hands in a circle and sang:

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

After they were seated, Lena Harden, the brilliant, the precise member of the circle, keyed interest to the highest point when she began to speak, saying:

"The officers of our Sunday school may have interfered somewhat with the study of our regular lesson, last Sunday, by their extensive innovation; but with one person at least they succeeded in impressing an irregular lesson in such a way as to change a life. Perhaps it might not be wise, as a rule, to introduce so much that is new to attract the eye at once; but in this case they must have been divinely led to do so, for I do not think that any one, or two, or even half dozen, of those new things would have begun to make the impression on me that was made by the accumulation of testimony, all bearing in the same direction. If I turned my head, and tried to turn my mind, away from one of those mottoes or charts,

I immediately met another conveying the same truth, or a different phase of the one truth. Finally your father, Gertrude, called attention to the very motto to which my eyes had been drawn again and again; and by the time he was through, those words had been graven on my very soul. Just as soon as I had reached home and eaten dinner, I went to my room, and never did another thing that afternoon but think, 'God's promises are only for those who will carry out God's plans.' It was plain enough, reasonable enough, and surely must be true. How could anyone ever expect anything else? Yet I was keenly conscious that I had been expecting God to fulfill his promises of good to me, while I scarcely thought to inquire as to his plans for me. I had accepted all his loving-kindness as a matter of course; and it had hardly occurred to me to ask what I might do to show my love to him. There ran through my head that line of a hymn, 'You treat no other friend so ill,' and those others, 'Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all.'

"At the prayer meeting, Wednesday night," continued Lena, "I was still wondering what it all meant for me, when another of those mottoes, the one on love's expression, looked down from the wall upon me and wove itself into the thought of the meeting: 'Love never asks how much must I do, but how much can I do?' And the answer came, if ever a girl was free to plan for herself, after her

education is complete and she is of age, I am. No need to work for the support of my family, or even of myself; plenty of other children to look after our parents if I should be called away; a sound body and a fairly sound mind. Then my eye lighted on that banner of Ian Keith Falconer, 'While vast continents are shrouded in almost utter darkness and hundreds of millions suffer the horrors of heathenism and of Islam, the burden of proof rests on you to show that the circumstances in which God has placed you were meant by God to keep you out of the foreign field.' The only circumstance I could urge was that my parents would be bitterly opposed to my going. I need not settle now my final attitude toward that opposition, as it will be four or five years before I could think of going anyway. Then I looked up and saw, 'If I ought, I must: if I must, I will,' and I said to Jesus, 'If you want me, here am I; send me.' Next day I couldn't keep it from mother, though I thought she would feel dreadfully. She just folded me in her arms and held me close; but between her choking sobs I heard her say, 'My daughter, a week ago I should have forbidden you ever to speak or think of this again; but a few days ago I had a visit from Mrs. Ogden, who revealed my Saviour to me in such a way that, shrink though I do from the unspeakably great sacrifice, I yet can thank God that he has given me a daughter who wishes to consecrate herself absolutely to his service.' I tell you,

girls, in getting nearer to Jesus, I got nearer to my mother than I ever had in my life before. A hundred things may happen in the next four years, but I am headed toward the mission field."

The feeling was growing intense, but the strain was somewhat relieved by the next young speaker, Catharine Preston, who beamed on her companions as she said: "This is just heavenly, girls; and it's too bad to come back to earth again so suddenly; but however many of us may be able some day to go as missionaries,—wouldn't dare to say I mayn't go myself,—my mind has been running on our present-day responsibilities in this matter of our Lord's work. Of course it goes without saying that there's lots to do right here in our own city for the poor, the neglected and the ignorant; and I think we might offer our services to our deacons for this work of personal ministry now. But there's one of those charts that has kodaked itself on my brain until it fairly makes me reel: do you remember it, girls?

"'HOW AMERICANS SPEND THEIR MONEY

Intoxicating liquors	$2,000,000,000
Tobacco	1,200,000,000
Jewelry and plate	800,000,000
Automobiles	500,000,000
Church work at home	250,000,000
Confectionery	200,000,000
Soft drinks	120,000,000
Tea and coffee	100,000,000
Millinery	90,000,000
Patent medicines	80,000,000
Chewing gum	13,000,000
Foreign missions	12,000,000

Nothing is said of the necessities, such as food, clothing, houses, lands, education, or of books, even the purely amusing sort, or of theater and opera, or of travel. So it amounts to over five billion dollars a year for what may fairly be called luxuries, a quarter of a billion for the church in America, and only twelve millions for the establishment of Christ's kingdom in all the rest of the world. Yet America is doing better than any other country. Think of it, girls, fifty dollars a year from every man, woman and child for self-indulgence, two dollars and fifty cents for Christ in America, and twelve cents for the saving of the world! Now, I have been wondering how far we girls are responsible for this most humiliating fact. I know some people don't like to have any suggestions made along this line; they call them petty, impertinent, too personal; but I am sure the Devil invented those terms to get us to pay no attention to one of our worst sins. And I am going to propose that we each make up an estimate of our own expenses for the last quarter, and see where we stand; will you do it?"

After some shoulder-shrugging and exclamations of horror, the novelty of the idea and the real seriousness of the whole question secured a unanimous agreement. With a beautiful prayer of thanksgiving, consecration and assurance of blessing by Grace Wentworth, the meeting came to a close with many still to be heard from. It was an epoch-making meeting for the class.

CHAPTER V

A MISSIONARY PRAYER PROGRAMME

THERE was nothing spasmodic about the new interest in the midweek prayer meeting at Westminster Church: it had been too spontaneous for that. On that first notable Wednesday evening curiosity had brought many; but profound interest, and the new realization of the presence of Christ, had brought more. The mere curiosity-seekers, of course, with the exception of those in whose hearts curiosity had turned to conviction, soon ceased to attend; but each recurring week had seen fully two-thirds of the members of the church at the meeting. Other engagements were no longer made for that evening by Christian people; visiting friends were brought along to the meeting as a matter of course; a movement was on foot among the promoters of lectures and concerts to arrange the dates for other evenings than Wednesday, lest they lose the patronage of Westminster Church people. At a meeting of the session, early in the week following the gathering of Miss Bemis' girls just recorded, it had been decided that if the opening up of all the classrooms for the overflow of the prayer meeting did not suffice for the growing company, the meeting should be thereafter held regularly in the main auditorium.

Wednesday night was a beautiful night, and the few who came late found only standing room until seats were brought for them from another part of the church. Surely never did pastor, unless it be in Korea, look forth upon a gladder sight than did the Reverend John Stanton on that Wednesday evening. His face fairly beamed with the joy of it as he gave out the first hymn, that dear, old-fashioned "Sweet Hour of Prayer"; and a great volume of praise rolled upward to the Hearer and Answerer of prayer. Then all heads were bowed as the pastor gave expression to the feelings of all:

"O Thou to whose immeasurable love we owe this sweet hour of prayer, it is thy children's hour. In no possible way can we thank thee adequately for this privilege, greater than any which the kings of the earth can confer upon their most honored subjects, for thou art King of kings and Lord of lords. Yet thou dost not so much summon us here as thy subjects, but rather invite us as thy children, to commune with thee in no formal, ceremonial way, but heart to heart. We have said our prayers in the days of our childhood; we have made prayers in the days of our manhood; we have offered prayers in the performance of official functions: Father, teach us simply to pray, to pour out our hearts before thee in sincere worship, in humble confession, in earnest supplication, in loving intercession, in unquestioning trust. Teach us the simplicity

of prayer and the limitless power of prayer. Teach us to pray as our Master prayed, not that thou wouldest do our will, but that thou wouldest enable us to do thy will, because it is the one perfect and altogether beautiful thing in the world. May we pray about the great things of life because nothing is too great for thee; may we pray about the apparently trifling little things of life in the consciousness that even our eating and drinking concern the greatest thing in the world, the glory of God. And more especially to-night we ask thee that thou wilt impress us with the hopelessness of our attempts to work for thee unless we secure for ourselves, and those for whom we pray, the wisdom and power of thy Holy Spirit, given only in answer to believing prayer. May our new life of fellowship with thy Son Jesus Christ express itself and perfect itself in prayer, and so, while giving or going, may we 'move the arm that moves the world' on behalf of that work dearest to thy heart—the speedy evangelization of the world. In thy Son's name, Amen."

Another old familiar hymn, "The Mercy Seat," was sung, and then the pastor said:

"More than six hundred men, women and children of Jaconsett coming together simply to pray! The power of it, the possibility of it, simply thrill one through and through! No urging has brought you here, no compulsion of any kind except the compulsion of a strong desire

for fellowship with one another and with our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. You feel with me that, while we are realizing more and more perfectly his constant companionship with each one of us everywhere, yet he comes in special manner, we hear more distinctly the rustle of his seamless robe and the accents of his loving voice, when we are thus gathered in his name, like the disciples in the upper room. Our theme to-night is 'The Potency of Prayer.' I have my chance to talk on Sundays: there are scores here from whom we should like to hear a word of experience or a word of prayer; so I shall do nothing more than start your thought with regard to the relation of prayer to that matter which has come to mean so much to us, the evangelization of the world. Christ said, 'Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.' That means both men and money. But does not God know that the laborers are needed, and that it will take money to send them? What is the use of praying him? Should we not rather pray men to go and men to give, for the men have the wills and the means? And so we do; but the Holy Spirit, in answer to our importunate and passionate prayer to God, can make our prayer to men tenfold more effective than it would otherwise have been; while the chances are not small that, in the very act of prayer, the question will come pressing home to the one who prays, How is

it with your life, your time, your money? Why should you not be among the laborers, or your means supporting them as they go forth to their toil? The personal call has come to many a man while he has been praying in an impersonal way for some one to meet the crying need.

"Let us, therefore, Christian friends, recognize the primacy of prayer among the forces which make for the evangelization of the world, as the connecting link through which the weakness and foolishness of man lay hold upon the power and the wisdom of God, and that which is in itself utterly insufficient becomes sufficient for all things. It is the only force which can quicken information into inspiration, transmute interest into passion, crystallize emotion into self-surrender and coin enthusiasm into dollars and lives. And whatever may be the contribution of any man to the work of Christ in the way of money or service, he has not performed his full duty, exerted his largest influence, nor enjoyed his highest privilege, until he has made definite, believing prayer for the work a part of his daily life. I am hoping that our church will henceforth have a definite programme of prayer for missions. Let us devote one of our prayer meetings each month specifically to this duty and privilege; it shall not be forgotten in the pulpit; let us not forget it in our families and in our closets. To aid in this direction, the Laymen's Missionary Movement has prepared a series of topics for special

prayer for each month, which will be printed hereafter on the backs of the envelopes which we are to use for our regular benevolent offerings. But we need not confine ourselves to these topics. Now, who is the first to have a word for us, or to voice our aspirations?"

"Well, friends, this is the first time you have ever heard my voice in meeting," spoke up Mr. Samuel Austin, rising briskly to his feet, "unless it was a business meeting to decide on the preacher's salary, or something of that sort. But I got up first to-night because I was afraid that after the rest of you once began there would be no chance for me. Perhaps you will hardly believe me, but I rise to testify to the power of prayer. Probably you all know that I have always been rather skeptical with regard to the supernatural, although I have never been able to reason myself away from a belief in the deity of Christ and the reality of his virgin birth and resurrection. But prayer has never seemed to me reasonable, except as an act of worship with a subjective benefit in the preparing of the soul to do and to endure. As you know, too, foreign missions have never appealed to me, because I never thought that we had enough more in our religion than other people had in theirs to justify the great expense; and I shouldn't wonder if it was true as to the kind of Christianity I had; it wasn't of the kind that is worth exporting. I was present on that Foreign Mission Sunday

morning, but thought the service hysterical and would not attend the other two meetings. But I heard of my brother's words and pledges, and of my nephew's consecration of himself, with regret amounting to disgust. Perhaps, if I had been there and heard their words, I should have felt differently. At any rate I gave my brother an awful blowing up for losing his head and letting his son sacrifice a brilliant career. All he said was: 'Well, Sam, you'll never be really happy until you lose your head in the same way; and I am praying for you every morning and night that you may lose it soon. And as for careers, there's none higher in this world than that of ambassador for Jesus Christ. You will see it some day, just as surely as I am praying for you.' I turned away, more indignant than ever; but I found that while I could get away from my brother, I could not get away from his prayers. The Spirit of the Lord just laid hold of me and overthrew one of my objections after another,—there is no time to tell it in detail,—until I not only lost my head but my heart also, and all that in me is, to that Great Son of God, who, as he goes forth to war, shall henceforth have me in his train."

This was news even to the elder brother, who ejaculated fervently, "Praise the Lord!"

"I am another of the members of this church who never took part in an 'experience meeting' before," said Mr. Stowell, as he rose from his

unaccustomed seat in this midweek meeting, where many had marveled to see him sitting with his wife, their son and two daughters. "And I hardly know how to do it, although there can be no doubt about my having had an experience, and a sufficiently novel one also—for me. Until a few days ago I was the most uncomfortable man in this city, I am sure. I have been fleeing from home to get away from my wife, and fleeing from my office to get away from Elder Gilbert over yonder. Yet the curious thing about it was that neither my wife nor Mr. Gilbert was pursuing me. My wife has never exhorted me at all; and Mr. Gilbert has not talked to me more than five minutes at any one time in the last two weeks; but from the time I first learned of Mrs. Stowell's remarks at that extraordinary meeting, and began to see the remarkable changes which have come over her, I began to be desperately uncomfortable at home. The first time I met Elder Gilbert, a few days after he came home, I couldn't tempt him with a cigar, and he talked some most revolutionary philosophy. Two days later I met him again, and he simply said, 'Stowell, you and I have often talked about "pragmatism"; there's a new kind of pragmatism coming into vogue that has laid hold of me with such a grip that I couldn't shake it off if I would; and I wouldn't if I could, for it is the best ever. Talk about the "value-judgments" in theology! If men would only be content with God's value-

judgments there, and give themselves to the discovery of what he says in his word about relative values in everyday life, we should have some pragmatism that is worth while. Two out of three of the members of our churches do not really believe their souls are of more value than their bodies, so how should they believe that the soul of another man, especially a far-away heathen, is of more importance than their own physical indulgence? But the change is coming, Stowell; it has begun already in our church; and, as an old friend of yours, I never shall be satisfied until my prayer for you is answered, and you join the new movement heart and soul—and bank account.' With that, off he went; but I kept meeting him everywhere, and though he never said another word on the subject, I knew he was praying for me. Then, one morning after I had started for the office, I returned for a forgotten paper and surprised my wife on her knees praying aloud for me, that my eyes might be opened to see Jesus Christ as she had seen him. I stole away without my paper; but the next morning I startled my family by gathering them together for family worship, and for the first time in their lives they heard their father's voice in prayer. Elder Gilbert's pragmatism is better than the most gilt-edged stock I know anything about. I have come to realize as never before how often the floating of a stock is the sinking of a man. The stock is all right as the

means to a higher end,—which it shall henceforth be with me,—but as an end in itself it is just as effective a sinker as a ton of lead. Friends, just try to forget the old Stowell, and take me into everything that is doing along the new line. I am going to follow my wife's example and set free some of the locked-up missionaries. Just keep on praying, and there won't be one of them left in the safe-deposit vaults of Jaconsett."

"I'll not take many minutes for my testimony," declared Deacon Thorne, as he hastened to take Mr. Stowell's place on the floor; "but a deacon who has not been a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost certainly needs to set himself right before the people who elected him to the office. There has been little in me of the spirit of Stephen and Philip. I have helped to divide up the offerings of the church among the poor; but I know I have made the recipients feel that it was the dole of charity rather than the ministry of love. But for the Samaritans and the Ethiopians I have had no use at all, having a sort of idea that they would be looked after by the 'uncovenanted mercies' of God, if he thought them worth looking after at all. At any rate, they were no concern of mine, for my field of labor was the poor of Jaconsett; and when the quarterly dole was complete my duty to my fellow-man was done and I need think of nothing but my business and my social engagements. As you know, I was not at home when Christ so remarkably revealed

himself to our church; but I was so fortunate as to be caught growling and joking over the matter with some friends, by our pastor, who, with a very few words, opened my eyes to what Mr. Stowell has just been talking about, the real values of life. The poor of our own parish never had half so warm a place in my heart before as they have now that I have come to take an interest in the Indians and the Esquimaux and the Mormons and the Freedmen and the Mountain Whites and the Chinese and the Africans. It seems as if my heart had not only grown larger and larger as each of these was admitted, but softer and more sympathetic at the same time. Speaking of deacons, what do you think of this advertisement, which I found in the paper to-day:

> "'ST. STEPHEN'S EUCHRE TO-MORROW
> The ladies of St. Stephen's Church will hold a euchre to-morrow evening. The prizes will consist of the articles which were left over from the fair which closed last week. The admission will be taken at the door.'

What makes you all smile? Don't you think St. Stephen would be delighted to preside as patron saint over a euchre party for the benefit of the church which was named in his honor and which was smart enough to think of such an admirable way to dispose of the unsalable articles from the church fair? Our Romanist friends are just a degree more clever, and establish 'The

Brewery of the Holy Spirit.' That wouldn't have shocked our fathers, two or three hundred years ago; and 'St. Stephen's Euchre' wouldn't have seriously shocked some of us a few weeks since. But it makes even the printer's devil smile and think thoughts that are not to the glory of God. Yet a good part of my life as deacon has been of a piece with 'St. Stephen's Euchre,' a sacred label on a pretty thoroughly profane thing. Thanks to the efforts of our pastor, and the prayers of Deacon Ransom and the rest of you, that's all gone by."

"I am glad you mentioned the prayers of Deacon Ransom, rather than his efforts," said that person himself; "for he hasn't ventured to do anything for you except to pray. How you knew I was praying, I am sure I don't know, unless you kind o' saw it in my face when I wanted to speak but didn't dare to, for fear I should make a botch of it. Well, friends, you've been jokingly calling me 'Deacon Philip' these last weeks, and it has rather pleased me, though I knew I wasn't worthy of it. And now we've got a Deacon Stephen, too; and a right good one he'll make, now that he's come actually to love the widows and the orphans and the heathen. I'm just that full of joy and thanksgiving that I think we'd better pray: Dear Heavenly Father, we can hardly get our breath right natural yet, after all the good news that's been coming to us, to tell thee how much we thank thee for answer-

ing our prayers in this perfectly wonderful way. We thought we had a big blessing already; but we knew there were some in our church that hadn't got it; and it tasted so good we wanted them to have some too. And now, bless the Lord! they're a-coming one by one, the men for whom we've been praying, the men who with lots of money have been starving, and the men who doled out dollars but not hearts; and thou hast fed them and warmed them and made their hearts glow with a new life. It's just wonderful, wonderful, Lord! But we're not satisfied yet. Thou hast said that if we ask, thou wilt give; and we are going to keep on asking until every member of our church gets the vision of the ever-present Christ, and begins life over again in fellowship with his Lord. Oh, may that happy day come quickly. For Jesus' sake, Amen."

"Let us continue in prayer," said Elder Gilbert. "We are indeed thankful to thee, our Heavenly Father, our blessed Lord Jesus, and our wonder-working Spirit, whose three persons in one great unity seem so much more real to us than they ever did before, because we have felt mightily the power of the Spirit revealing to us in clear vision our Saviour, through whom we have come to know the Father. We thank thee for the increase of our faith, which has led to an increase in our prayer, and given power to our formerly ineffective petitions. Thou hast truly gone beyond our faith; but we have grown bolder now,

and will venture to believe that, for the glory of thy holy name, thou wilt permit us to see here a church after thine own heart, one in which our Master has his way in every member, as every mind and body, and all earthly possessions are counted a sacred trust, and held and used subject absolutely to thy call. We will not spend our time in vain regrets over our own past; but, having held an accounting with thee, and set things just as far right as possible, we will give ourselves with joy to the life that is hid with Christ in God, and therefore goes about doing Christ's work in the world. Grant that his joy may be fulfilled in us, that our joy may be full. In his name, Amen."

"You may be interested, friends, in knowing that I have been accepted by the Board of Foreign Missions, and am to start for China early in the fall," reported Dr. Corson. "It so happened that there were two urgent vacancies in the same mission, so that my dear friend, Dr. Gage, is to go with me, and, as you may imagine, we are very happy over that. Now, what I want to ask of this church, which seems twice as dear as it ever did before, is that you will keep on praying for us, now, that we may be prepared for the new work, and afterward that we may never get so busy about the bodies of men that we shall have no time to prescribe for their souls."

"And I," spoke up Dr. Winthrop, "have my

appointment to go to Korea, the land of present results. But while it will be inspiring to jump right into the harvest, I shall have no higher privilege than Corson and Gage, for, however responsive Korea is now, China is the land of the future. No one of us has any reason to envy another; but we all equally depend upon your prayers to sustain us in the work and the trials. But I reckon that those trials are not to be compared with the joy of the service."

"I have my appointment also just to hand," joined in Clinton Brill, the first of the two theological students who had offered themselves on that first evening; "and a bit of the old sinful pride came up in my throat when I first learned that I was to be sent to Africa. I wondered if those secretaries had not made a mistake somewhere, for you know how general the feeling is that 'anything will do for Africa.' It took but a very few minutes' thought, however, to convince me of the absurdity of that idea, as I ran over in my mind the names of Livingstone and Stanley and Moffat and Mackay and Pilkington and Stewart and Good, and many others, not to speak of the men and women who are now proving themselves the peers of the best in any land; and I asked myself, Who are you to esteem yourself too good to follow in their train? I have been devouring African literature every spare moment since, and am now ready to give thanks with all my heart that my fine constitution fits me

peculiarly well for a most honorable appointment to the land of Livingstone and Mackay, to help make another Uganda in our West Africa Mission. If any of you are looking for inspiration, just read some of the recent reports from that field, whose abandonment was seriously proposed a few years ago, but which is now bringing forth a hundredfold."

"You may wonder," remarked the pastor, "that I do not make report on my application for appointment; but my age is proving more of an obstacle than I thought, and the question has not yet been decided. With all my heart I congratulate these young men of ours who have already received their appointments to the work which has come so near to our hearts during these weeks. Elder Stanhope, will you not offer a special prayer for these young men who are to become the first of our church's living links to the world-wide field?"

"Our Heavenly Father," began Mr. Stanhope, "we have long been accustomed to pray, 'Send forth more laborers into thy harvest,' and we found it very easy to do so, for it cost us nothing. It is only very recently that we have been willing to pray, 'Send forth our young people as laborers into thy harvest,' and to use our means to send them forth. But now, by thine own Spirit, we have awakened to the realization that we are not our own, but are bought with the most precious of all prices; and that what we possess is truly what we have

thoughtlessly called it, 'means,' and not an end. Dear Lord, thou art bringing us into an altogether new relation to thy kingdom in the world, and art showing us that the reason for our frequent discontent is simply that we have not sought first thy kingdom and thy righteousness. And now we gladly give thee our very best, the sons and the daughters of the church, that they may go forth to make thy love known where it is not now known, and to bring the love which we have learned of thee into closest possible touch with the world's greatest need. May that great love of thine fill full their hearts, illumine their minds, make radiant their faces, give unction to their lips, add skill to their hands, and impel their feet in all the varied ministry of consecrated lives. Cheer them in times of loneliness; guard them in times of peril; comfort them in times of trial and sorrow; strengthen them in times of discouragement; keep them humble and thankful in times of great success; give them that success in abundant measure, and enable them to make as real to the native of China, Korea and Africa as it has become to us, the abiding, personal presence of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen."

The meeting was closed promptly; but so many wished to grasp the hands of Deacon Thorne, Mr. Samuel Austin, Mr. Stowell and the young volunteers, that it was long before the sexton had an opportunity to put out the lights and close

the doors. Among the last, yet unable to escape the surprised and curious observation of a few, Henry Austin set off with Lena Harden, who had come alone to the meeting. As Gertrude Austin and Grace Wentworth lingered talking at the last corner, where their ways separated, they were fairly startled by the passing of Henry and Lena, engaged in animated conversation.

"What does it mean, Gertrude?" whispered Grace, as soon as it was safe to ask the question.

"I haven't an idea, Grace," responded Gertrude, unable to withdraw her gaze from the two who had just passed by. "I have never seen my brother pay Lena any attention whatever; and it may be merely that he saw her starting off alone and politely offered his escort, knowing that I was going with you; but it may also be that the new missionary interest has drawn them together and developed an interest in each other. I don't know anyone whom I should like better to see Henry interested in than Lena, if it were not for the opposition her father would be sure to offer. However, we would better not build too many air castles on the basis of one walk home from prayer meeting. They both have years of preparation yet before them, and there may be nothing in it. After that meeting to-night I feel as if even Mr. Harden might be brought to see things as we do. I will agree to pray for him every day, if you will. It will mean so much to Lena, as well as to the kingdom of God."

CHAPTER VI

A MISSIONARY EDUCATION

THE girls of Miss Bemis' class were all eager for Saturday afternoon to come once more, and again not one of them was absent. They were expecting some interesting disclosures in fulfillment of their agreement as to expense accounts; and, though the making up of those accounts had occasioned no little mortification in almost every case, yet all felt that the confession of their faults one to another, with prayer one for another, would be of great assistance in the endeavor after better things upon which all were determined. Little did they imagine how widely extended would prove the influence of what they were doing that day. After Lena Harden had led them in an earnest prayer, Gertrude Austin, as president, asked the girls what their wish might be as to the character of the meeting. Catharine Preston at once took the lead, saying:

"Since I made the proposal last week that we should make out lists of our expenses, I ought to be the first to present one. I hardly need to say that I am not proud of it; but frank confession is good for the soul, and I want to have it over with. Our father has given Caroline and me, since we were sixteen, five dollars a week

apiece as an allowance. It is to cover gloves and notions, but not clothing, and we can use it just as we like. So my income for three months has been about sixty-eight dollars, and this is how I have spent it, as nearly as I can remember, for I don't keep accounts:

Gloves	$10.50	Soda water and cream	$7.00
Jewelry	6.00	Theater and opera	10.00
Flowers	9.00	Church collections	1.00
Concerts	5.00	Sunday school	0.50
Postage	1.00	Missions	0.50
Notions	4.50		
Confectionery	13.00		

That is, I have spent thirty-three times as much on myself as I have on the kingdom of Christ, and one hundred and thirty-two times as much as on the evangelization of the world! But I tell you, girls, this is the last quarter that I shall have to be ashamed of such a record. In the first place, I am going to try to make up a little for the past by giving to the Lord at least one-fifth of my income, which will be thirteen dollars and sixty cents. And it isn't going to mean much self-denial, either. I can easily save at least a dollar and a half on gloves and a dollar on notions. I've jewelry enough, goodness knows, but I'll leave two dollars for the necessary pins and things: that gives me four dollars. Half my candy, half my flowers, half my soda water, no more theater, but a little more for concerts:—why, that gives me just two-fifths

to give away, instead of one-fifth! Perhaps I should save some of the money, or buy some books. Well, I'll see; but I am sure I shall not want to spend more on myself when I remember that Jesus is with me."

Caroline Preston was a much quieter girl than her twin sister, and it was not so easy for her to speak. Yet she followed her sister at once, saying: "It is hardly necessary for me to say anything, for, as you all know, Catharine and I very seldom do anything different. When she has a new pair of gloves, I have to have one; likewise jewelry, and all the way down through the list. And when she has reason to be ashamed, I generally have equal reason. I really think it is a mistake to let girls of our age have as much of an allowance as we have, for so much of it is sure to be wasted,—though I know many girls have much more; but I am glad we have learned that, even when we are living on an allowance, we are stewardesses of Jesus Christ, and I am going to join my sister in turning over a new leaf."

"You girls who have large allowances needn't think that you are the only ones who waste what you have on yourselves," said Julia Marsh. "My father never felt that he could give me any allowance at all; but because Alice Stanhope had one, I coaxed, and he finally said that he would give me twenty-five cents a week to use just as I liked. I do not have to use any of it for clothing. The gloves and other things that

I wear are bought by my father, or given me by my Aunt Helen. What I have worn for this quarter would be, about, gloves, two dollars and fifty cents; notions, one dollar. My allowance of three dollars and twenty-five cents has gone about this way:

Candy.....	$1.25	Flowers.....	$0.50
Soda water.....	0.75	Church and Sunday	
Chewing gum.....	0.50	school.....	0.25

I didn't give anything to missions because I didn't think I had enough. If I gave a larger proportion of my income to the church than Caroline and Catharine, it was only because I couldn't give less than a cent a Sunday if I gave anything at all. When Catharine was figuring just now, it occurred to me that, with girls like us who are not feeding and clothing ourselves, a tenth, or even a fifth, of our income is too small a proportion to give to the Lord. I am going to make a dollar cover the candy and soda water, cut out the silly gum, and that will leave half of my allowance for more sensible things and for the Lord's work."

"I don't have any allowance at all," said Margery Wilson; "but my father or my mother gives me something every once in a while, and I have earned quite a little taking care of Mrs. Walker's baby for a few hours at a time; so I suppose I have had altogether as much as five dollars in the last three months. But I always

felt that my father was doing so many things for the church. for which he was not paid, that I need not give anything to the church, and that we were too poor to be expected to give anything to missions; so I've spent every cent of it on myself, except ten cents I gave to a poor old woman who was out of work, and a nickel I gave to little Sallie Trimble to replace a broken dish over which I found her crying. My account is very much like the others except that what others have spent on gum I have spent on moving picture shows and postals. I can see now that my thought about the church was just pure selfishness, because I have a duty to it myself, as a member; and as for giving nothing to missions, I just feel too mean for anything. I don't know that I shall ever get enough education to go myself as a missionary; but I can certainly have some part in the work by giving; and I will."

"Well, girls," sighed Gertrude Austin, "though I've been chairman of the Christian Endeavor Missionary Committee, I don't believe my record will show up better than any of the others, —hardly as well, indeed, for I have had so much more than most of you to spend on myself. You all know that when our Aunt Louise died, she left to Henry and me the greater part of her money, so that we each have about fifty thousand dollars, the income of which, two thousand dollars a year, we are allowed to use, though we

cannot touch the principal until we are twenty-five. Father and mother cannot bear to take anything for our food at home, but we pay for our own clothes and everything else. So I have had five hundred dollars this quarter, and I mean to be just as frank as any of you and tell you just how I have spent it, as nearly as I can recall.

College expenses, one-fourth year, travel, tuition, board, rooms, athletics	$230.00	Clothing and shoes	$95.00
Millinery	25.00	Jewelry	15.00
Books and papers	17.00	Postage	3.00
Picture postals	3.00	Cabs and street cars	12.00
Flowers	20.00	Confectionery	17.00
Soda water and cream	9.00	Theater and opera	18.00
Concerts and lectures	6.00	Church	3.25
		Sunday school	1.30
		Charity	5.00
		Foreign missions	0.75
		Y. P. S. C. E.	1.30
		Home missions	2.50
		Balance on hand	15.90

I have figured that at least a hundred and fifty dollars of that is simply waste on self-indulgence. Doesn't it seem strange that we girls always feel so poor, and a dollar looks so big, when the question is one of giving, especially to missions, though we treat one another to candy and soda water, and make presents, with great freedom? One dollar for candy, or for a dozen roses, or for a theater ticket, or a cab, has always seemed to me but a trifle. What a difference it makes when we come to look at things with Jesus' eyes!"

"My father tells me," said Helen Talbot, the

druggist's daughter, "that more than two-thirds of his total sales, and of his profits, are from cigars, confectionery, chewing gum and soda water; and that, of the last three, fully three-fourths are sold to girls and young ladies. And I saw the statement in a paper that at one of the Student Christian Conference places, last summer, the store took in more for confectionery from the young women students at one conference than all the colleges represented by those students were giving to missions in a year. I used to see so much candy in the store, and nibble so much, that I got rather sick of that, and of soda water, too; but I love ice cream, and salted peanuts, and éclairs and such things enough to make up. And I have been foolishly carried away with those moving picture theaters, until I suddenly woke up the other night in the midst of a dream which showed me into how much vain and even bad thinking they were leading me. Then I began to figure the money they had cost me, even at five and ten cents each, and I was scared. I did a little watching after that, noticing how many of those places a city like ours supports, and finding by questioning that thousands of nickels given to children for church and Sunday school go to those places instead, and usually to the worst of them. It is too bad that a good thing has been spoiled in that way, just because there is more money in the bad ones than in the good ones. I am going to keep away from them, for

I am sure there are very few that Jesus would care to see."

Helen read her quarterly report, as did all the rest, except Grace Wentworth. There was variety of detail, but an impressive monotony of proportion between self-indulgence and sacrifice. When all had spoken but Grace, she merely said, with a smile, "Our time is more than up, girls, and there is no use in reading mine."

"Oh, but you promised, Grace; and we all want to hear yours," said two or three together, for all suspected that modesty prevented the most unselfish of their number from presenting her statement. With evident reluctance she yielded, saying apologetically:

"I must keep my promise, if you insist, girls; but when you hear my account, you must remember that my circumstances from childhood have been different from those of most of you. I have not had the temptations of most of you, because we have always had to practice pretty strict economy at home. But our parents wanted us to learn to use money, so, ever since I can remember, we have had our allowances. Until we are sixteen we have each had a cent a week for every year of our ages, to spend as we liked. After sixteen, the purchase of our clothing, and everything but our food, is turned over to us,—of course always in consultation with our parents until we come of age. Anyone who goes to college is to have food money added; but other

extra expenses he must earn. My allowance is now a hundred and fifty dollars a year, or thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents for the quarter, and I have spent it in this way:

Clothing and shoes.	$10.00	Books.....	$2.25
Street cars.....	0.50	Confectionery, etc..	0.50
Concerts and lectures.....	2.00	Y. W. C. A. gymnasium, etc.....	1.25
Pictures for room ..	1.00	Chair for room	4.00
Chair for father....	6.00	Church.....	2.60
Sunday school.....	0.65	Y. P. S. C. E.....	0.65
Charity.....	2.00	Home missions	1.30
Foreign missions...	2.60	Balance.....	0.20

You see, I abominate chewing gum, and I don't feel the need of candy and soda water as some girls do; and I raise my own flowers without any expense. Then I suppose I care more for pictures and books than some of you. Father and mother, you know, have never approved of the theater, and I have never been to one in my life, and am rather glad of it. They say we can go if we wish after we are twenty-one; but from all I hear, plays, with a few exceptions, are growing worse rather than better, and I do not think I shall ever go. As to my giving, we were always taught to give systematically, and it makes it a lot easier. My item for clothing is rather light, I know; but when I saw those two chairs, one just the thing for father's birthday, and the other just fitting my little room, I let some of the other things I needed wait for another quarter. So,

you see, I too have been indulging myself this quarter."

"What do you think, girls, would be the result if all of us should adopt Grace's plan of self-indulgence for the next quarter?" asked the class president. "More than one-fourth of her tiny income has gone straight to the Lord, and fifteen per cent more has gone back in loving remembrance to her father! Which one of us all, do you suppose, enjoyed her income the most, the past three months?"

Thoughtfully they had gathered; yet more thoughtfully these girls went their homeward ways.

It was, of course, well-nigh impossible to keep strictly within the little circle of thirteen girls the interesting developments of that afternoon. Indeed, several of those girls felt that the experience was likely to prove so profitable to them that they wished their brothers and other friends to know, in a general way, the result of their experiment. Among these was Gertrude Austin, who took advantage of an opportunity that very evening to talk with her brother Henry, between whom and herself a delightful mutual confidence had sprung up in consequence of the new ideals of life which both had adopted. She drew him aside into her own room, and sitting down beside him on the couch, began:

"Henry, we've been having such an interesting experience in Miss Bemis' class to-day. I

wanted to tell you about it a week ago, but thought I would wait until we had tried it actually. Catharine Preston proposed that we not merely decide that we ought to do more for the kingdom of God, but that we figure up what we were doing for ourselves and then confess our faults one to another. We have just been doing it this afternoon; and though it was one of the most humiliating experiences I have ever been through, I am sure it will be one of the most helpful. We were all conscientious about it and didn't hide anything; and we found that, whether we had three dollars a quarter or five hundred dollars, we were all spending many times as much on foolish indulgences, even down to chewing gum with some, as we were using for the kingdom of God,—all of us except Grace Wentworth, dear soul, who was giving away nearly half her pittance right along."

"What a sweet, unselfish girl she is!" rejoined Henry warmly. "It's been a wonder to me that I haven't fallen in love with her, Gertrude, for she'll certainly make a good man happy some day; but my foolish heart won't go where it ought. But about this scheme of yours; it is certainly quite original, and not by any means a bad idea. I wonder how it would work with the fellows in our class. I've a good notion to propose it on Monday evening when we hold our meeting. We've got something else on foot for that evening; but it won't take long to propose this plan,

report its success with your class, and see what the fellows think of it."

"Some of us were afraid at first that it might seem too personal, too—what would you call it? —'Sumptuary,' I believe is the technical term; but it has become perfectly evident to us that one of the greatest troubles with Christians is that we are altogether too careful in cutting down expenses for the kingdom, and not half careful enough when it comes to matters of personal indulgence. So we're very glad we've weighed up our candy and gum, and counted our pennies and dollars."

"That is wonderfully well put, Gertrude, and will bear quoting to our class. The special object we have in meeting this week is to try to organize a mission study class. We shall not necessarily limit the class to our little circle. Our teacher, Dr. Sears, is, as you know, the Committee on Mission Study, and he felt that we were the best nucleus he could find for the first class to be formed. He is going to meet with us on Monday night; but I do not think that need prevent the broaching of the other matter, for Dr. Sears is now just as much in earnest in this matter as anyone else in the church, and he knows thoroughly how to be a boy with the boys. My! it doesn't seem possible that we are anything but boys yet; yet the youngest member of the class has attained his majority, and Preston is twenty-five! There is a very good spirit in the class just

now, and I believe we can have a good study class."

"I heartily hope you may, and that we may soon have several others going for different groups in the congregation," replied his sister, as Henry rose to leave the room.

Dr. Sears' class had been invited to his home for their meeting the next week. So complete had been the change in Dr. Sears; so much had Mrs. Sears, as well as the doctor, been moved by the clear Christian confession and new spirit of their daughter Anna, that Mrs. Wentworth had found the task of winning Mrs. Sears to an interest in the evangelization of the world an exceedingly easy one. Her previous lack of interest had been chiefly the indifference born of ignorance. Like her husband, she had been vexed rather than stirred on the great days which began the movement in the church; but the events in the church and in her own home since those days had been quite sufficient, as she told her friend Mrs. Wentworth, to warm her heart toward the whole world, and make her wish to share the blessings of the gospel with all men. With the help of her daughter, she proposed to have some very attractive refreshments ready in waiting for the members of her husband's class, when they should have finished their business. To judge by their devotion to that business, they were not in the least aware of the treat in store for them.

When the young men had all arrived, Dr. Sears seated them in his parlor and cordially welcomed them to his home, after which he said:

"Ten always was a fine unit of numbers; and when one wishes to start a new enterprise, there is no better way to begin than for one man to get ten others to join him in setting the wheels in motion. In a church there is no ten which can make a new enterprise effective through a combination of enthusiasm and good common sense like ten young men, not of the callow sort, just beginning to pass out of childhood, but of the vigorous thinking and observing age which you have all attained. A great change has come over our church, as you know; but that change requires for its permanence the enlistment of the interest of every young person in the church, and your determination, not merely to get as much good out of the world as possible, but to put all the good into it which may be made possible by seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. If I should ask you tonight seriously to consider for twenty-four hours the world's greatest need, I feel quite confident that you would come back with a unanimous finding that, both at home and abroad, the world's greatest need is not the establishing or perfecting of constitutional government, the adoption of universal arbitration, the building of more railway and steamship lines, the adoption of a universal language, the development of

automobiles or aëroplanes; but such a knowledge of God in Christ as shall bring every thought, as well as every word and deed, into glad subjection to his perfect will, that the will of God may be done on earth as it is done in heaven. In other words, 'all things are ours' only when 'we are Christ's and Christ is God's,' as our pastor said the other day. We see in him, and in the truths which he taught, the only and the absolutely sure panacea for all the wrongs and discords of earth. But, however convinced we may be in our own minds of this as a theoretical proposition, it will take a far more vigorous and compelling grip upon us if we study systematically and persistently the records of the transformations already wrought by the gospel, and the immeasurably great need which still exists for its proclamation and application. When we want to study anything else in this fashion, we form a class for the purpose. The new Missionary Committee of our church is strongly convinced that we should have mission study classes among us; and, having been appointed a sub-committee on this subject, I never have had a doubt that the very best place to begin is in our own Sunday-school class. You have been holding weekly meetings by yourselves, and, possibly, they have been so profitable that you would not care to have other matters give place to mission study; but either on this or some other evening,—for many of you are free at no other time,—I shall be very

glad to help you organize a mission study class, if you feel inclined to do so. There is a book which I think we ought to study first of all, as it answers in a brief but forceful way the thousand and one questions which everyone is inclined to ask about missions. It is called 'The Why and How of Foreign Missions,' and was specially prepared to serve as a text-book for such classes. Afterward we can take up the study of the various countries of the world and their religions, and the fascinating biographies of the world's great missionaries. What do you say, men? Let each one speak his mind freely."

"Well, I can say one thing, Dr. Sears," spoke up Henry Austin with energy, "and that is that if we young men do not get to moving pretty soon, we shall find ourselves left far behind by the young ladies of the church, just as the men of the last generation allowed themselves to be entirely outdone by their wives. I know one class in the Sunday school at least, the one to which my sister Gertrude belongs, which has been doing some startling things already, even though they have not organized mission study. They began by confessing their faults one to another, and then they all agreed to make up accounts for the last three months, and tell one another how their gifts to the Lord compared with what they had spent on themselves. The results are said to have been somewhat amazing and humiliating; but not one whit more so, I imagine, than they

would be with us if we should try the experiment. My sister made a remark which was so well put that I told her I should repeat it at the first opportunity. She said: 'If anyone thinks this operation too sumptuary, we have come to believe that one of the greatest faults of Christians in general is that we are altogether too sumptuary about what we give to the kingdom, and not half sumptuary enough about our selfish indulgences. We're very glad we weighed up our candy and gum and counted our pennies and dollars.' Now, we may have to substitute something else for the candy and gum; but I think it would be a most wholesome thing for us if we should count up the pennies and the dollars. I fear that, in my own case, most of the pennies have gone to the kingdom and the dollars to myself. Perhaps I ought not to bring this up now; yet I believe the two things will help one another; and I, for one, am heartily in favor of organizing the mission study class. I shall be only too glad to be a member of it."

"As for the evening," suggested Porter Stanhope, a young man of twenty-three, the oldest grandson of the elder, and for several years engaged with his father and grandfather in the department store in which the elder was still a partner, though no longer a very active one, "I think we might with advantage use the evening which we have been accustomed to take for our meetings. I am sure there have been many

meetings when the time was spent far less profitably. We have felt that we ought to meet; but have never had any very definite aim in our meetings, and so have wasted a great deal of time. If confessions are in order, there have been two or three occasions when the few who were present spent the time playing cards. If Dr. Sears will teach the class, I shall be delighted to join it, and can hope to attend regularly now that the Merchants' Association has decided on early closing. As to Austin's report of what the girls have been doing, it fairly made my hair stand on end to think of presenting to the rest of you a detailed statement of what I did with my money the last quarter; yet I don't know that it's any more humiliating to confess to cigarettes than to chewing gum! Some of the bitterest medicines are the most effective, they say; and I don't know but such a dose might prove the best remedy for what is certainly a deplorable state of affairs. I'll do it with the rest of you."

"Well, I won't!" scornfully cried Edward Harden, the very image of his father in body and mind, and associated with him in the office. "That sort of thing may do for girls in their 'teens; but I think it would be an impertinence for any one to inquire as to the way in which a man spends his money; and, as for volunteering to give an account of it to a lot of other men, with all due apologies to those who suggest it,

I think it is simply silly. I agree with my father in thinking that Westminster Church is quite overdoing this foreign mission business; and I hope it will come to its senses before long. I think we could spend our time much more profitably on something else than on studying these goody-goody books about missionaries who have converted and baptized a thousand natives within a month of landing on a savage island, and then have been cooked and eaten by the backsliding cannibals. But, of course, if every other member of our class wants to study missions, I'm not going to be ugly and stand out. Only, if this thing is not done in moderation, I believe my father and I will both take our letters to some other church."

"Well, Edward, we are very glad that you are disposed to join the study class with us, even though you do not find yourself in sympathy with all that is going on in the class and the church. Certainly no one will compel, or even urge, you to present a statement of your personal expenditures. That is always strictly a matter between a mature man and his God; and no one else has any right to it unless it is freely offered for the general advantage. Personally, while the idea is novel, and at first bears a faint suggestion of the washing of soiled clothes in public, yet, the more I think of it for a little circle like ours, the more I feel inclined to agree with Miss Gertrude Austin in what she so well said. I

think also, Edward, that if you will take the pains to make a careful comparison between the sum total of the life of our church now and two months ago, you will become convinced that something besides foreign missions has taken possession of us, something which gives the church a larger place in the social and civil life of Jaconsett than it ever had before. That which has made a new man of me, and of many another, is not our interest in foreign missions, but the new conception of a life in close, conscious fellowship with Jesus Christ; and this determines my relation to foreign missions, to this class, and to everything else. If any of you would really rather have me as I was two months ago, please say so."

This made even Edward Harden smile and put him in a better humor. Charlie Ransom expressed forcibly the general feeling when he said: "We would rather have one Dr. Sears as he is, than ten of Dr. Sears as he was; and I believe we are all agreed on that. I move that we ask our teacher to become the teacher of the first Mission Study Class in Westminster Church, of which class we shall be the charter members; and that as many as feel so inclined shall present, as initiation fee, a 'sumptuary statement' for the last quarter, any not so disposed being admitted ex gratia."

"I second the motion," said Robert Weatherby, "though I fear I shall be so ashamed that I shall want to steal in under the last clause, for my con-

science is already beginning to bring up the ghosts of dead extravagances to haunt me. My account, if I ever present one, will be rather lopsided."

This unconventional and rather humorous motion was put by Mr. Horace Preston, the oldest member of the class and its president, and carried with no opposing votes, Edward Harden refraining from voting. Dr. Sears had ready at hand copies of "The Why and How of Foreign Missions," that no time might be lost, and he gave a brief outline of the first chapter, afterward assigning a sub-topic to each member of the class for special preparation from the text-book and from any other available sources; and expressing the earnest hope that much material would be brought in which would help in the solving of other questions likely to be suggested by their consideration of the subject together. Even the hasty glancing over of the first chapter that evening made Edward Harden ashamed of the disagreeable things he had said; but he made no admissions save by greater geniality as the class talked of other things and formed some plans for more personal work for the young men of the congregation who had not yet taken a stand as Christians. No reference was made in this conference to the three of their own number who were not known as Christians, who, however, could not but feel that the members of their class were having them prayerfully in mind. After an hour and a half of more prac-

tical planning than the class had ever done before, Dr. Sears expressed his great gratification at the results, apparent and prospective, of the meeting, and added:

"Before we close, I cannot refrain from expressing my longing desire, which I feel sure is shared by every other present, that our class should be an absolute unit in the joyful service of our risen and living Lord. We shall not count as a perfect ten, or even as a full seven-tenths of ten, until every one of us acknowledges Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And I am equally certain that no one of you will ever find his own life complete until he has made the full surrender and accepted the full salvation. In doing so you give up a body prone to increase its own inherited curse, a mind darkened to the real values of life, and a spirit storm-tossed among ambitions and doubts and disappointments; and you receive in return a body which is the sacred and beautiful temple of the Holy Spirit, a mind which finds all the best things in life within the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, and a spirit at rest in the peace of God which passeth understanding, rich for this life and the life which is to come. If I had done my duty by you all years ago, I believe you would all have been in Christ now; but now, not merely in Christ's stead, but in his felt presence, I pray you be reconciled to God."

And the man who had never led his class in

prayer before, closed the meeting with a few words of such earnest personal supplication for these grown young men that more than one of them found it difficult to keep back the tears. When he had finished, he threw open the folding doors which led to the dining room. This room opened widely into the parlor; and the young men were astonished to see a well-spread table, with not only Mrs. Sears and Anna smiling a welcome, but also Gertrude and Grace, Lena, Catharine and Caroline, who had been coaxed in to help entertain. There was no need of introductions, and a delightful hour of the most genial Christian sociability closed an evening such as few, if any, of the young men had ever before spent. The bonds between teacher and class had been mightily strengthened; and every man of them knew that he had been brought nearer to Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VII

A WEEKLY MISSIONARY OFFERING

DURING the week which followed it was a funny sight to observe the expressions on the faces of the members of Dr. Sears's class as they met one another in various places. The greeting was sure to be, "Hello, Austin; how's the sumptuary law working?" or, "How do you do, Weatherby? How's the market for cigars up your way this week?" or, "Well, Preston, what are you cutting out of your dietary?" Yet, with all the joking, it was proving the most serious week in the lives of some of these young men, most of whom were already making their own way, though only Preston and Richard Walker were married. They all saluted one another in very hilarious fashion as they met at the home of Henry Austin, the following Monday evening; but it was more as a cover to the serious embarrassment felt by more than one at the self-discovery of the week than as ridicule of the idea. None of them would have been surprised by the absence of Edward Harden; but he was there, and brought his text-book with him.

Dr. Sears proved as good a teacher of missions as he had recently been of the Bible, and the hour given to study of the subject, "The Foreign Mission Motive and Aim," passed

altogether too quickly. More than one member of the class had been struck by the quotations facing the opening of the first chapter, such as "The goal of history is the redemption of the world"; "Loyalty to God and Christ, love to man, and the tremendous want, constrain us." Their teacher brought out so clearly and strongly, largely through question and answer, that, "in proportion as the soul's experience in Christ is genuine and deep, will we desire to communicate it to others; the man who has no religion of his own that he values, of course is not interested in the effort to make it known to others. He who has knowledge that is essential to his fellow-men is under obligation to convey that knowledge to them. There is no worthy reason for being concerned about the salvation of the man next to us which is not equally applicable to the man five thousand miles away. The command of Christ is the bugle call, which to the true soldier never loses its thrilling, response-compelling power. It is not a request, not a suggestion. It leaves nothing to our choice. It is an order, comprehensive, unequivocal, a clear, peremptory, categorical imperative: 'Go!' The evangelization of the world was the supreme thought of Christ: it is still his supreme thought. Failure to do the will of Christ emasculates the essential idea of the church: if we believe in Christ, we must believe in foreign missions. Christianity is not a lifeboat sent out to a sinking ship to

rescue a few passengers and let the rest go to the bottom. The missionary is the advance agent of civilization, the greatest philanthropist, the achiever of the largest results. The aim of foreign missions is to present Christ so intelligently to men that they will accept him as their personal Saviour, to influence men at every stage of their careers, and to organize the converts into self-supporting and self-governing churches."

It had been expected that Edward Harden would surely contradict and oppose, or at least be cynically critical; but, greatly to the surprise of everyone, he appeared interested in the discussion, asked some intelligent questions, and at the close of the hour said that he had become so interested in the first chapter that he had read on through the book; that if everything in that book was true he had evidently been misinformed about many things, and that he wished to apologize to Dr. Sears and to the others for his intemperate language the previous week. What had come over Edward Harden? was the wondering thought of all who knew him well.

"Now that the study is over for the evening," said Dr. Sears, after assigning another chapter and giving out special questions to each one, "I will take my departure, that you may feel greater freedom in whatever else you may wish to do this evening."

"I am sure that none of us would feel any constraint in your presence, Dr. Sears," protested the class president; "and I think it might be very helpful to us younger men to have you with us while we clean house."

This being evidently the general sentiment, Dr. Sears did not feel at all averse to remaining, but gave over the leadership to Mr. Horace Preston, who introduced the further programme with the remark: "I have enjoyed the first part of the meeting this evening much more than I expect to enjoy what is yet to come, though the more I study that chapter in our text-book, the more dissatisfied I feel with what I have to report. To save my face, I would gladly be excused, but to satisfy my conscience and stiffen my backbone, as well as because I am the oldest member of the class, I will confess first. I receive a salary of four thousand dollars a year, and my income from inherited means is about as much more, so that I have an income of about two thousand dollars a quarter. Of the expenditures of the last quarter I will give you as accurate an account as I can.

Life insurance	$125.00	Furniture, pictures, etc.	$50.00
Fire insurance	15.00	Concerts and lectures	15.00
Servants	180.00	Summer outing, one-fourth	160.00
Depreciation of automobile	130.00	Books and periodicals	75.00
Maintenance and running automobile	100.00		

Dental work	$55.00	Travel	$85.00
Tobacco	45.00	Medical attendance	35.00
Confectionery, etc.	35.00	Club expenses	25.00
Taxes	80.00	Flowers	35.00
Water, heat and electricity	75.00	Church support	10.00
Food for three and servants	320.00	Sunday school	1.30
Insurance on same.	40.00	Foreign missions	.50
Clothing for family	200.00	Y. M. C. A.	2.50
Theater and opera.	45.00	Home missions, various	2.50
Entertaining	50.00	Charity	3.00
		Balance in bank	5.20

My wife's personal expenditures she has provided from her own means. So you see I have 'lived within my income,' as the saying goes. I have had little left to invest. Perhaps my automobile, insured as it is against all risks, and my life insurance, might come under the head of investments. Lived within my income? No; I have done nothing of the sort. I have lived within my income plus the Lord's; and have reckoned his at less than twenty dollars, while mine has been nearly two thousand dollars! Do you think he could live on it? Even a Chinaman couldn't do that. And to make it even twenty, I have had to reckon in my poor pay for my own church privileges! I tell you, men, it was a mighty poor sort of partnership the Lord formed when he went into business with me. He put in all the capital and supplied all the brains, only asking me for very modest dividends; and I haven't given him but one per cent—strictly speaking only half of

one per cent! If ever a man felt mean to the tips of his toes, I'm that man; but I'm still young, and there's an opportunity yet to prove a little less like the wicked husbandman. I hereby solemnly promise that I will never again give my Lord less than ten per cent; and I shall try in addition to pay up some of the arrears."

After a brief period of silence, Henry Austin rose to his feet, saying: "I presume that Horace Preston has expressed pretty nearly the feeling of the majority of us in view of the discoveries we have made. I suppose we are all accounting for a quarter previous to the recent great changes in our views of life. No doubt our accounts for the last month or so would look better. My account is not unlike Preston's, except that I have no family, keep up no house, and have not ventured on an automobile, as I am just finishing college. From the estate of an aunt I have an income of two thousand dollars a year. From some prizes and literary work I have made two hundred dollars more, the past year, so that my income for the quarter has been five hundred and fifty dollars; and I have spent it about as follows:

College expenses, one-fourth year	$255.00	Conventions	$18.00
Postage and stationery	13.00	Daily papers	2.00
Books and pictures	27.00	Y. P. S. C. E.	1.30
Theater, opera and concerts	30.00	Charity, plus old clothes	2.50
		Foreign missions	.50
		Clothing and shoes	115.00

Cabs and cars.....	$15.00	Barber.....	$8.00
Confectionery, flowers and other amenities.....	40.00	Church and Sunday school.....	3.00
Baseball and football games.....	16.00	Y. M. C. A.....	1.25
		Home missions....	1.00
		Sundries unknown.	1.45

That is, I have spent every cent, but can't account for quite all of it. Including church support, which is not benevolence, I have given less than ten dollars, or a little less than two per cent of my income, which is really worse than Preston, for I haven't had the home demands that he has had. And all the time I was congratulating myself because I was giving twice as much to foreign missions as the average Presbyterian church member, ignoring the fact that I had more than four times the income, and that averages become deadly whenever they are regarded as a maximum standard. But even as a minimum, it is no standard at all, for more than half the church is giving nothing, and not more than one in a hundred of the rest treats foreign missions as he does any other feature of his life. Indeed, I am inclined to think that we have not regarded it as a feature of our lives, but as a duty to be done once a year, a little sop to be thrown to our consciences; then the rest of the year, and of the income, may be devoted to other more congenial things. And, notwithstanding all that has taken place in our church, I do not believe that we shall have the matter in the right form

until the whole church adopts the threefold rule of Scripture, 'Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper,' that is, individual, systematic, proportional giving. I know that our pastor is eager to bring this about; and I do not believe we could do a better thing than agree among ourselves that we will make our new beginning in that way. It will encourage him and the Missionary Committee very much."

"You remember, that first week of this new work, how Elder Preston said that his two dollars a year had formerly looked like two hundred, but had come to look like the proverbial 'thirty cents'?" spoke up Porter Stanhope. "I heard the other day of a wealthy man who was giving fifteen dollars a year to missions, and thought himself a model, for he was giving more than anyone else in the church. He was boasting one day to a mission campaigner, when this man turned on him with, 'Mr. Blank, did you ever figure how much that is a week?' 'No, I never did. What's the use?' 'Well, suppose you try, and see if it doesn't look very much like thirty cents.' When that wealthy man realized that he had actually been boasting of thirty cents a week, a mere fraction of what he spent any single day on selfish indulgences, given for the greatest business of the church, the evangelization of the world, he was mortally ashamed, and jumped at once to two dollars a week as a starter. I have

been even more mortified than that, for I have not given the thirty cents, or even an appreciable fraction of it. As my grandfather said, that first Sunday, he has always given something to the support of missions, and so has my father; but I have never been led to think that anything of that sort could be expected of me until I was established in a home and business of my own. Even the support of the church has always been treated as my father's business, not mine; and in none of these things have I done more than drop an occasional coin into the collection. My allowance has been larger than Austin's; my actual college expenses about the same, while the rest of my money has been frittered away much worse than his; and I don't believe that I have put two dollars in the quarter into anything that was not selfish. We young men pride ourselves on being 'level-headed,' but that term seems to be pretty nearly synonymous with 'able to take care of No. 1.' If we are liberal in standing treat with the other fellows, that passes for generosity; and if we give away the old clothes that are no longer in fashion, that passes for benevolence. I don't believe you want my accounts in detail: there is too much monotony about them. Just write tobacco in place of several items in Austin's account, or, rather, put it in in addition, to the amount of fifty dollars, and you'll not be very far off, except that I have run through more money. My conscience has

been telling me to cut out the tobacco, as well as my doctor; but as the latter doesn't cut it out himself, I'm not sure that I should have done it if I hadn't been shamed by the stand taken by my aged grandfather and the rest of the session. That money will certainly do a lot more good in the form of the gospel than in the form of smoke."

"I've often wondered," remarked Charlie Ransom, in his whimsical drawl, "what these friends of mine who have lots of money managed to do with it all; and now I've found out. I expected to be able to say a number of big round O's after they had read their accounts; but they've spent their money a lot more sensibly than I supposed they had. About the only difference between them and me is that they've traveled first class, while I've traveled third. It's been pretty much along the same line of railway, and we've stopped off to see just about the same sights. They took a coach and four to see the Falls, while I went in the omnibus. They puffed cigars, while I rolled cigarettes. They paid a dollar a pound for their confectionery, while I paid twenty cents for my candy. They sat in the boxes, while I took to the peanut gallery. Their books were bound in half calf; mine in plain cloth. But the principle is all the same—or the lack of principle. For up to the limit of my means I have been living for myself just as much as they have, and the amount that I have

given to the Lord is a negligible quantity. I'll read the whole list if you want it; but the big items, of course, are for the playthings, while the pitifully small ones are for life's biggest business. I was afraid the bonbons had spoiled my appetite for the substantials; but I've found to-night, under the coaxing of our study class, the appetite's coming back; and I'm right-down glad that it's so. The amount that I shall have to give will not be very large, but it will bear a more respectable relation to what I spend on myself."

"I warned you all last week," said Robert Weatherby, "that I was going to be too much ashamed of my account to present it. It is lopsided, sure enough; but I think I really ought to read it because my circumstances, like Charlie's, are so different from Preston's and Austin's and Stanhope's. From my clerking in Breese and McDowell's I receive sixty dollars a month, which has to cover everything, for, though I live at home, I have paid my board since I began to earn enough. So my hundred and eighty dollars for the quarter went about this way:

Board	$65.00	Barber	$ .75
Books and papers	3.75	Church and Sunday school	1.50
Lodge fees	5.00	Clothing	18.00
Drinks, hard and soft	14.30	Vacation excursion, one-fourth	7.40
Candy and gum	5.60	Tobacco	16.50
Moving pictures	3.75		
Washing	6.50		

Billiards and pool	$8.00	Postage and stationery	$2.65
Theater	13.25	Jewelry	3.00
Travel, street cars, etc.	3.20	Charity	1.85

You will see that it is not merely lopsided, but that I have been, I presume, the only member of our class to spend any of my money on intoxicating drink. So I have a double reason to feel ashamed; and I can assure you that it is only because I want to be strictly honest that I bring you my account at all. There is another reason also, and that is that I have made up my mind to 'cut it out.' But I am not so foolish as to believe that I am strong enough for it myself; and so I want the class to pray for me that Jesus Christ, whom I now, for the first time, take as my Saviour, may be also my ever-present friend, to keep me in the hour of temptation, and to teach me to want to give to him the share that he wants of that which he gives me. Perhaps such a move as I am going to propose should not begin with me, as I am just starting my Christian life; but perhaps, for that very reason, I want the more to start right; and I should like to see our whole class a unit in two respects, one a determination never to give less to God's work than the old Jews who did not know the gospel, and the other an adoption of the weekly offering plan. Why, it stands to reason that a plan which works so beautifully in business will work well in the church. We all know that a very large per-

centage of all the large furniture, pianos, organs, sets of books, houses, land, is being paid for by the week or the month; and tens of thousands of families own their homes who never could have done so on any other plan. Two thousand dollars seems far out of the workingman's reach; but five dollars a week for ten years is a very moderate rental, and the first thing a man knows, the home is his. Since I made up my mind to start right I've been looking this matter up a bit, and I find that churches which, on the old collection plan, were giving twenty-five dollars a year for missions, are now, on the weekly offering plan, giving five hundred dollars, and those which gave five hundred dollars are finding themselves able to give from two to five thousand. I am sure there is no better way to stop some of these wasteful expenditures of ours than to feel that, of our income, so much per week is not ours to waste. Just to get the sense of the class, I make a motion that we agree never to give less than a tenth of our incomes to God's work."

"I second the motion," said Chester Danforth, a close friend of Weatherby. "It seems to me the most businesslike thing we've ever done, and I need it just as badly as any of you. I won't take the time with my account, but it is like the rest, and very like Weatherby's."

"I doubt if this is a matter which can be determined by majority vote," remarked the president; "for it must be a personal conviction and

resolution by each man for himself. We might have an informal show of hands, and then prepare a paper for signatures afterward, if it seemed best. I believe there is already organized somewhere a 'Tenth Legion,' with which we might associate ourselves. Their pledge is to give not less than a tenth. Just to see how we stand, all those who would like to make this pledge"——

"Mr. President, before we take that vote, I should like to say a word," broke in Edward Harden, in a quiet, modest, yet determined way, quite different from his former violent explosions of opinion. "For years I have had the name of living, and have been dead. Jesus Christ has been nothing to me but a name, a doctrine, my acknowledgment of which has given me a certain respectability, a degree of freedom from fear with regard to the future, and, I am afraid, more than a degree of freedom from responsibility for the use of my time and money. I have been laboring under the curious, yet common, delusion that a Christian is held to a less strict account than a non-Christian, because the latter is to be judged by the law, while the former is under mercy and grace. It never dawned on me until the other day that to presume on the patience and long-suffering of God, and give him less as my Saviour than I would as my ruler and judge, was the height of ingratitude and the depth of cowardice. I was furious last week at the suggestion of rendering an account to the

other members of the class, just because I really haven't been proposing to render an account to anyone. But when we began to look into that first chapter of our book, the question kept intruding itself upon my mind, if missions have this motive and aim, they are nothing less than the thing for which the church exists, and for which Christ came; and the man who has a part in the church and in Christ, must have a part in missions. When Christ came into the world, it was to free men from responsibility for sin, but surely not from responsibility for service. Was not the freedom from sin to be the very producing cause of a far more effective service than ever before? When our Heavenly Father gives to us of this world's goods, or permits us to gain them, how foolish for us to suppose that it is his aim that we may eat and drink and be merry while life lasts! Why have we not seen his intention that by the rational eating and drinking of a part we may be the better able to use the rest for the accomplishment of the church's mission? The Bible is clear enough, 'Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' And one of those mottoes in the Sunday-school room has pinned itself in my memory. 'Christ is either Lord of all, or he is not Lord at all.' I feel inclined to add another couplet to that, 'Christ is either Lord of all, or he is not Saviour at all.' I am sure to-night that I have had neither part not lot in Jesus Christ

heretofore, though I began to take the sacrament when I was fifteen; but I am also sure that, in spite of the dishonor and shame I have brought to his name, he has accepted me; and I have promised him that he shall be my Lord of all to the end of my days. I assured you a week ago that you should get no accounting from me. But I have made up as accurate an account as I could, and, as a wholesome medicine for myself, would read it to you, but for the lateness of the hour. I'll sum it up in a word by saying that I've spent every cent of my income and run in debt a hundred dollars; have next to nothing to show for it in the way of books, pictures, or intellectual uplift; and that I cannot figure up quite two dollars given to the whole range of church and benevolent objects. It could hardly be much worse; but it is positively the last quarter that I shall ever have such an account to be ashamed of. And I say, fellows, I want to ask you to pray not only for me, but also for my father. If ever a man visibly hardened his heart against conviction, he is doing it now, and he's just miserable. Neither Lena nor I can get even a smile out of him. If he laughs, it is in a hollow, cynical fashion. But I do believe prayer will bring him around. Bless you, fellows, for being so patient with my old pig-headedness!"

"I want a word, too, Mr. President, before that vote is taken," quickly spoke Herbert Thorne, younger brother of the Deacon, a regular

attendant in the class, but heretofore quite unapproachable on the subject of personal religion. "I have been a good deal of a cynic also, and it has been my cynicism, more than anything else, that has kept me out of the church. I saw too many of what I styled hypocrites among the members of Westminster and other churches. I did not think my brother was much of a deacon. Our teacher here was a nice enough man, but no better with religion than he would have been without it. Most of our elders smoked, while I abhorred the habit. Our pastor preached good sermons, but was well paid for them and didn't show much inclination for self-denial. You fellows who were church members were using your time and money, I thought, more foolishly and wastefully than I; and I knew hardly a person in the church who didn't have money enough to do anything he really wanted to do, while all were so poor when the church made a call. In fact, I've been one of the most devoted mote-pickers that ever was, and thought that by my own unaided efforts I could be quite as good as the best of you. But with all my picking I couldn't get a mote out. Then recently there has come along One who has spoken a word to the deacon and the doctor and the dominie and the elders and all the rest of you, and the motes have disappeared; while I have suddenly been revealed to myself as almost totally blind by reason of the beam that was in mine own eye,

the beam of loveless censoriousness. All my righteousnesses have been made to appear as filthy rags; and in these rags I have to-night thrown myself at the feet of Jesus, to be cleansed and clothed, and counted henceforth as one of his humble servants to do his bidding."

While Herbert Thorne was speaking the last words, Stephen Talbot, the only member of the class who had not yet confessed Christ, rose quietly and left the house, with no word to anyone. When the president of the class called again for a show of hands, every right hand in the room went up, including that of Dr. Sears, who said as they separated:

"Will wonders never cease? This has been a blessed night in the history of our class, and of the kingdom. Let everyone pray for Stephen Talbot: our number must be complete."

CHAPTER VIII

A MISSIONARY CANVASS

THE Missionary Committee determined at its next meeting, on advice from the session as to the importance of establishing the benevolent offerings of the church on the weekly basis, that the most important work before the committee was the institution of an every-member canvass. While it was not possible to determine that every member of the church should give according to his ability, yet both session and Missionary Committee were determined that that ideal should be the standard of whose attainment they would never despair. So great had been the results already attained that they were not without hope that the goal might eventually be reached. When the meeting had been opened with prayer, and Mr. Stanton had been called upon for communications from the session, or any word of suggestion, he said:

"The plan of the session is to have presented to the session next Sunday the great desirability of placing all the gifts of the church on a weekly basis of subscription, whatever be the method of payment, some finding monthly or quarterly payments more convenient. We have done this for some time in the matter of church support,

ever since we gave up the custom of pew-letting because it perpetuated caste distinctions in the house of God. We have unanimously agreed to adopt the 'double envelope,' which provides two attached but readily detachable envelopes, one for church support, the other for beneficence, with full opportunity to indicate on the envelope the preference of the giver for particular forms of beneficence, and the organization in the church through which he wishes the money to pass. Perhaps the most important of all the functions of this Missionary Committee is the taking of the plea and the pledge to every member of our church. There will be several hundred whom you will not need to visit because they will have responded to the first request from the session for such pledges. Indeed, it is delightful to think that as many as four-fifths, or even nine-tenths, are likely to respond in this way, so that your duties will be lighter than they would be in most churches."

"How do you think the lists should be divided up, Mr. Stanton?" asked Dr. Sears.

"I should say that where there is such intimate acquaintance as will make approach easier, you would better pick out old friends; but in the case of others, usually the general fitness of things will indicate. Yet I learn from the experience of others that, while it is not usually wise to send the poor to the rich, because it weakens the appeal, yet it is often very effective to send the

rich to the poor, as a proof of the fact that the church means business and that the poor are not despised. I notice that some churches are completing the entire canvass in a very short time by increasing the number of canvassers, doing away with one service some Sunday and devoting the half day to a novel 'worshiping of God by offerings' through the visitation of every member of the church before the day is over. I think it may be wise for us to try the slower method first, to give larger opportunity for presenting the matter in each home; but we might wind up the campaign with a second attack by other canvassers, on those who fail to respond the first time."

"Is it the wish of the session that we should make one canvass for church support and another for beneficence, or combine the two in one canvass?" asked Mr. George Quincy.

"We are inclined to make but one canvass, as that will save time and labor, put in service at once the double envelope and emphasize the comparison between what we are doing for ourselves and for others."

"I wonder if it would not be a good plan to report the operations of the first week at our next meeting, so that we can all profit by the experience of others, as well as our own," suggested Mr. Quincy.

"I certainly hope that will be done," cordially assented the pastor.

"I hope that we shall not attempt this thing

single-handed," remarked Elder Wentworth. "You know we are told that one shall chase a thousand but two shall put ten thousand to flight. I heard a man the other day telling how he went into another man's office to get a contribution for some good object, and came out again empty-handed and discouraged. Meeting a more plucky friend on the street and bemoaning his failure, the friend offered to go back with him and try again. The two together got a hundred dollars out of that man, and made him feel that he had made a good investment. 'At the mouth of two witnesses,' you know, 'shall a matter be established.' It is ten times as hard to turn one's back on duty and say 'No' to two men as it is to one; so I move that we do like the disciples, when Jesus sent them out, go two by two."

"It may take longer to cover the ground that way," said Mr. Stanton; "but I have no doubt that the contributions will be larger, and more intelligent and cheerful. We will see to it that all the pledge cards, the record sheets, the envelopes, and some printed leaflets, are ready to be given out on Sunday, and will meet at the close of the evening service to assign to the members of the committee the names of all those who may not have handed in their pledges during the day, that you may begin work at once."

"I foresee one difficulty, Mr. Stanton," said Dr. Sears; "and that is that our committee

represents only the benevolent work of the church. The trustees are not in this at all. Will they not feel this oversight, be out of sympathy with the whole matter, and thus hinder the work?"

"That is a matter of which I was just about to speak," replied the pastor; "I think we should by all means associate with us in this work the board of trustees. It may prove good for them as well as for those whom they visit. They meet to-morrow evening, and I will see that the matter is brought before them. I believe that I can demonstrate to them that the canvass for benevolence, so far from decreasing the gifts to church support, will largely increase them. It has certainly done so in hundreds of other churches which have tried it."

All the sub-committees had been actively at work, and had much to report as to the securing of literature for a library, the preparation of a special programme for the next missionary meeting, and other progressive measures. One of the special features of this next meeting was to be the presentation of a foreign mission topic by one most interested in home missions, and of a home mission topic by a foreign mission enthusiast.

At the meeting of the trustees the next evening it did not prove difficult to persuade them of the wisdom of joining in the canvass; and they appointed a number of their own members equal to the membership of the Missionary Committee, though one or two of the board were still skeptical

as to the effect upon local church support of this great development of interest in missions.

On the following Sabbath morning Mr. Stanton presented to the congregation the plan in its entirety, using I Corinthians 16: 2 as his text. He recounted in a few words the marvelous changes of the past few weeks in foreign mission interest, and presented also concisely the appealing needs of America, the new towns of the west, Alaska, Porto Rico and Cuba, the foreign communities in our cities and towns, the negroes and the mountain whites, the incoming immigrants, of the denominational schools and colleges, of the publication of good literature and the organization of Sunday schools. Then he appealed for local charities, for the poor, the sick, the disabled and the unfortunate; and finally appealed for a more universal and systematic contribution to the current expenses of the local church. He illustrated the effect of following the scriptural rule of weekly giving by the example of many churches which had increased their contributions from two to twenty, or even a hundredfold, when weekly offerings were introduced; and expressed the earnest desire of the entire session that each member should base his gifts to these causes upon the manner in which God had prospered him, that is, in proportion to his income, ever bearing in mind that the question is not "How much of my money shall I give to God?" but "How much of God's money shall I keep for myself?" He then

described the new envelopes and the pledges, the opportunity given, on the latter, to each individual, for free specification as to the division to be made of his benevolent contributions, any unspecified offerings to be divided according to the judgment of the session. He urged the voluntary making of these pledges by every member of church and congregation, young and old, so as to render unnecessary any personal solicitation. If, however, any felt in need of more light, their failure to pledge would be considered an invitation to the committee appointed for the purpose to wait upon them in their homes. Pledge cards and pencils would be found in the pews, that all might take immediate action; but pledges would also be received at the evening service. The committee would begin its work on Monday.

Earnestly, tenderly, was that great congregation led in prayer by its pastor, that the business act of that day might be the glad expression of the life in Christ and for Christ of each member of the church, or of the desire for a fuller life on the part of those who had not yet come into that vital relation to him; that the church might become absolutely a unit in its recognition of that Christian stewardship which was not bondage or hardship, but liberty and delight; and that the windows of heaven might be opened yet more widely to the church thus seeking to bring all the tithes into the storehouse. A few minutes

were then given to unhurried, silent prayer and meditation, after which, seeing once more their Lord seated "over against the treasury," the congregation busied themselves for a time with pencils, and then filed past the treasury and deposited their cards. The service was almost as impressive as those on the Sunday of vision, and few of those present failed to drop their cards into the chest. At the evening service those who had not been present or prepared in the morning were given an opportunity.

When the committee met to count the cards, it was found that, with a membership of eight hundred and twenty, fifty of whom were non-resident, there were nine hundred and four pledges. Analysis showed that all the resident members except seventeen had made a pledge, though twelve of the number had pledged nothing for benevolence, and five others had excluded foreign missions from their pledges. Thus one hundred and fifty-one non-members had made pledges, one hundred and twenty-three of which included benevolence, though thirty-six of these omitted foreign missions. About two-thirds accepted the session's apportionment of their gifts; many ladies stipulated that their gifts should go through the Women's Society, and young people made the same stipulation as to the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. The results had exceeded the anticipations of all; and the committee found its task limited to the

visitation of thirty-four resident members and about eighty regular attendants, sixteen of whom had pledged nothing, the others, having begun to contribute, being regarded as hopeful subjects of personal work. The committee had decided that, as there were so many in the church quite as much in earnest as themselves, they would double the force of visitors, so that ten pairs of consecrated Christians divided among themselves the one hundred and fourteen to be visited, determined to do their utmost to complete the work within the week. The pastor agreed to see the odd four himself, especially as there were that number whose circumstances were so peculiar as to render it wise that he should see them.

Among these four were an old man and his wife, who apparently possessed nothing but their tiny old cottage, some distance out of town. Both were in feeble health, the husband unable to do more than odd jobs, while his wife took in a little sewing. It was evident to all that they had scarcely enough to keep body and soul together; and when their names were read several of the committee suggested that they be omitted from the list. The pastor was about to speak, when Elder Wentworth exclaimed:

"What! you aren't going to deprive them of their Christian privileges just because they're poor, are you? I should call that 'respect of persons.' I believe if our pastor should go to them and offer them a share in this newly appreciated

privilege of ours, by a very small regular offering, it would brighten their lives amazingly. It may be they're ashamed to offer the two mites because they do not know that they count for more than the rich man's abundance. And I believe it will be fine for the church to know that even these poorest of the people, themselves at times the objects of charity, want a part in the evangelization of the world. After all, every one of us is an object of charity,—God's charity,—and we're just now planning how to use his donations so as to glorify him."

Again the beloved disciple had fathomed the heart of the Master, and there was none to dispute the wisdom of his words. The pastor went, the very next day, to see Mr. and Mrs. Granger, and found them both at home, no work having offered for the man, who was preparing the frugal meal, while his wife stitched away on some clothing sent in to be mended. They welcomed the minister with glad faces, but with many apologies for the limited quarters afforded by their one living room:

"It's but a poor place in which to receive our minister, Mr. Stanton; but it's glad indeed we are to see you, sir. If it were not for the work you have sent to us, and the clothing and the money that have come now and then from the church, we should never have been able to pull through; for, what with my rheumatism and the wife's neuralgia, we are not good for much. But

God has been very good to us; and I only wish I was strong and well so that I could have some part in these new doings at the church."

"Well, why shouldn't you have a part in them, Mr. Granger? Neither rheumatism nor neuralgia can disable the arm of prayer, which, after all, is the greatest power in the evangelization of the world, if it be genuine and backed up with all the power we have. God cannot do much toward answering the lazy man's prayer; but he can do everything for the helpless man who prays. As to the gifts, you know we are told that they are always estimated 'according as a man hath, not according as he hath not.'"

"Yes, Mr. Stanton, there's a lot of comfort in that," said Mr. Granger; "yet one doesn't feel right in not giving when other people are giving and when the work needs it so much. I believe we could do something by pinching a little closer. We could give up a cup of tea now and then, and one of our two weekly meals of meat occasionally. They do say that beans are just as nourishing as meat, and they cost less. But what we could save wouldn't be enough to do anything with. And then, too, it doesn't look just right to give anything away when we are objects of charity ourselves."

"But why not, Mr. Granger? Everything that any of us has comes from God, some of it through his blessing on our work, some of it through other servants of his when we are unable to work; and

if we choose to deny ourselves in order to have a share in his great, blessed work, do you think he could possibly be displeased?"

"No; I wasn't thinking so much of him as of folks, Mr. Stanton. They might think we were accepting their help when we didn't need it."

"If I hear of anyone who thinks that way, I'll invite him to come over here and make you a call, to cure him of any such idea. And as to what you could give not being enough to do anything with, do you remember what the Lord said about the poor widow's two mites? I am inclined to think that he meant not only that they counted for more with him than the abundance of the rich, but that they would actually do more. How many of the millions which have since been given by rich and poor do you suppose have been inspired by that woman's example and the Lord's words, or drawn forth by the shame of the comparison? Those two mites have done the work of millions."

"I suppose that's true, Mr. Stanton," replied the old man; "and we should like to do a little; but the smallest figure on your pledge card is five cents a week, and I doubt if we could give that much apiece by any hook or crook."

"But there is a blank space on the card for any amounts other than those mentioned. Make it two cents a week, or five cents between you, if you like."

"Well, I think we can do that, unless we have

some big set-back; and we'll be so glad to have a part in it all. Wife and I were talking last night about that idea of 'locked-up missionaries.' She has an old breastpin laid away in her drawer: it isn't the style they wear now; but we were wondering if it would sell for anything that we could give to pay up some of our back dues for the Lord's work. We haven't liked to sell her mother's pin for our own uses, but if it will help to save souls it seems a pity to keep it laid away." And the old man walked over to the bureau and took out the brooch, handing it first to his wife, who touched it lovingly, and then handed it to the pastor, who took it very reverently as a sacred thing, gave a start of surprise at its beauty, and promised to try to sell it.

From the cottage of poverty the pastor made his way to the home of wealth, set in the midst of lawns and gardens, the handsome residence of Vincent Schuyler, a retired business man, one of the trustees of the church, and by far the richest man in the city, yet a man of such a peculiar disposition that none of the committee had been willing to deal with him, but had begged their pastor to go. No one had much faith that his name could be secured on a pledge for missions. Mr. Stanton found him in his garden, with sleeves rolled above the elbow, working himself and superintending the work of his gardeners.

"Good morning, Mr. Stanton," he called, as the minister approached. "You see I like to

'mingle with the soil.' It's a fine way to pass the time, which hangs rather heavily at times on the hands of a man who has retired from active business. My wife and daughters make it lively enough, in the house and out, goodness knows; but a man like myself gets a bit tired of women's doings. But what brings you here so early in the day, and the week? I thought this was 'blue Monday' with you ministers. You will go away blue enough, I can assure you, if you have come to talk about missions, as I suspect you have. I turned in my pledge yesterday for the support of the church, and it was larger than ever before; but not one cent am I going to subscribe to missions. If I run across any worthy objects of charity during the year, I'll give to them what I think is right; and if any public enterprises strike me as deserving of help, I'll put some of my money into them; but I haven't any money to throw away on the rascally Chinese or the beastly Africans; and as for that home mission work out in the west, why it's just a fight of the denominations to crowd or starve one another out. Since I saw six churches, all depending on home mission boards, in a town of five hundred people, I have thrown no more of my money away on home missions. When I give my money for work, I like to see that work done under my own eye, and then I know my money isn't wasted. My money was all earned by hard work, Mr. Stanton, and I propose to see that it isn't frittered

away. And then, I don't like these pledges,—except for church support, where we have to have a certain amount regularly,—for they take away that spontaneity which is the most beautiful thing about true benevolence. Every appeal ought to stand on its own feet, and if it appeals to me I will give. But I haven't even offered you a seat, Mr. Stanton: come over and sit down in the arbor, where we can talk better."

Just as they were seating themselves in the arbor, Mr. Stanton much amused at the fashion in which this man had placed himself on the defensive without waiting for a word, there came ringing over the lawn a girl's clear voice, calling, "Father! father! where are you?" The father's reply brought the tripping feet and the merry, eager face of a charming girl of nineteen to the arbor. Not in the least disconcerted at sight of the minister, she extended her hand, crying:

"Oh, good morning, Mr. Stanton; isn't this a lovely day? O father, Mr. Sprague has just come with that new touring car you were going to look at. I'm going for a ride with him now to try it; but I know I shall like it; and I just wanted to ask you if I might take it if it works all right. You know our car is two years old, and it's really too shabby for anything except long country tours in muddy weather. This one costs only forty-five hundred dollars; and Mr. Sprague said that for an extra five hundred dollars he would put on some finer lamps and tanks, and an extra top of

a different sort,—a new idea,—making it really seem like two cars. Mr. Stanton, when I get to know the new car perfectly, I am coming round some day to take you and Mrs. Stanton and the children for a long ride. The car holds seven. Now do please hurry up and say 'yes,' daddy; and then I'll go away and you two can talk all the business you want to."

"Well, Lucile, I'd like to see the man who could say no to you, when you once start coaxing. If you like the car, tell Sprague to charge it to me. And if it's only a matter of five hundred dollars, you'd better have the extras. I tell you, Mr. Stanton," he added, as his daughter tripped joyfully away, "one of the nicest things about having money is to let a girl like that play ducks and drakes with it,—within limits, of course; within limits, of course. But now, what I was saying before that whirlwind arrived, was this"——

"If you'll let me say just a word, Mr. Schuyler," broke in the minister in desperation, taking the antique brooch from his pocket, "I brought over this morning for your inspection, as a connoisseur, one of the most attractive little curios that I have seen in a long time. Remembering your fine collection of mounted and unmounted jewels, I thought possibly this jewel might find a discriminating purchaser. I am selling it for the owner"; and he held out the pin to the now eager man, who looked it over and held it to the light with kindling eyes, and finally exclaimed:

"Well, Mr. Stanton, you wouldn't have dared to carry that loose in your pocket if you had known what a treasure it is! The setting is one of Tayler's most unique designs, of the early seventeenth century; the opal is one of the richest, most beautiful I have ever seen, and that circle of diamonds, though small, is of the first water. I can tell you right now, without your going any farther, that the pin is worth every bit of two thousand dollars, and I will gladly pay that for it to add to my collection."

"I felt sure when I saw the brooch that it was worth far more than the owners supposed, perhaps some tens or hundreds of dollars. But if it is worth as much as two thousand, I think I would better consult the owners before I sell." And without referring to the subject of missions, greatly to the surprise of Mr. Schuyler, the pastor took up his hat to go.

"You are welcome to inquire anywhere as to its value, Mr. Stanton; but I hope you will give me the refusal of it. It is one of my greatest pleasures to put my money into these quaint and beautiful things which cannot be matched elsewhere. By the way, Mr. Stanton, you haven't seen that Rembrandt I secured last week, have you? Come in and see it before you go." And he led the minister to his spacious art gallery and showed him with pride and reverence his latest acquisition among a host of others. "It was cheap at seventy-five thousand dollars," he said,

"for you know a genuine Rembrandt is not often to be had in these days."

After giving full admiration to the picture, Mr. Stanton hastened first to the chief jeweler of the town, who also went into ecstasies over the brooch and appraised it at twenty-five hundred dollars; then to the cottage of the poor old couple, who were greatly surprised to see him again so soon.

"I have found a purchaser for your brooch, Mrs. Granger," he said; "but it proves to be so much more valuable than you supposed that I did not venture to sell until I had consulted you again. It is a very rare piece of jewelry that you have had laid up here so long, and will bring enough to make you comfortable for many a day, and to provide a handsome contribution for the Lord's work besides. It is worth twenty-five hundred dollars; and if you wish me to sell it for that, you can put the money in the bank, and then make out a check for what you wish to give to the Lord."

"What's that you say, pastor? My mother's old breastpin worth twenty-five hundred dollars? Well, she never had that to give for it, so it must have come down from richer ancestors."

"Yes; it was made more than two hundred years ago, so that part of its value is in its age."

"Well, Mr. Stanton, I never expected to have any such sum of money as that to put into the Lord's work; but it's glad I am to be able to un-

lock a missionary that I never knew I had locked up here! You just sell the pin for what it will bring, and some day when you have time we'll plan how to put the money into the work in such a way that we shall feel it is doing the Lord's work for us."

"But, Mrs. Granger, in your circumstances you will surely wish to use some of this money to make yourself and Mr. Granger more comfortable. It seems as if God had sent it to make your way easier, and let you have a part in his work besides. I could not think of accepting it all for that work."

"Well, Mr. Stanton, if you'll excuse my saying it, it's not you I'm asking to do the accepting of it. Mr. Granger and I, we gave that pin to the Lord, and to the Lord it belongs, whatever it may be worth. We'll be none the poorer for parting with it at twenty-five hundred dollars than we would have been at five dollars, and we should feel as if we were robbing God if we said to him, 'We were ready to give you our only treasure if it was worth five dollars, but twenty-five hundred is too much for you.' God will provide for us, we are sure of that, and we've no need to begrudge him his good fortune, sir. At the most, it won't go very far toward saving the Chinese from their superstition and the Africans from their degradation. I only wish it was a hundred times that much that we had to give, Mr. Stanton."

Marveling at the faith and consecration of

these poor, despised disciples, whose deep poverty was so abounding unto the riches of their liberality, the minister knelt for a moment of grateful prayer for God's blessing on the gift and on the givers; then, placing the brooch carefully in an inner pocket, he hastened again to the home of Vincent Schuyler, and finding him at leisure, took out the brooch and said:

"Mr. Schuyler, this proves to be a remarkable gem in more senses than one. Haynes the jeweler was as interested as you, and after examining the stones, told me, of his own accord, that the pin is worth every cent of twenty-five hundred dollars. But by far the most remarkable thing about it is the wish of its owner concerning it. That owner is none other than old Mrs. Granger, of whose struggle with poverty, shared with her infirm husband, you already know considerable. Believing profoundly that no member of our church, or any other, will ever be in right relation to the present world or the world to come, to God our Father or our Lord Jesus Christ, unless he has some part, according as God has prospered him, in the great work of Christ and the church, the giving of the gospel to the whole world, I did not feel that even the poorest members of the church should be denied that privilege; so I went to see what the Grangers would wish to do, and be able to do, in this direction."

"Why, they're objects of charity themselves!" broke in Mr. Schuyler, contemptuously. "Who

ever heard of going begging of beggars? They laughed at you, didn't they?"

"No, indeed, they did not laugh. I found that one of their great griefs was their fear that they could never have a part with others in the great work. Did you never read in the Scriptures, Mr. Schuyler, of the poor widow who cast her mites into the treasury, and was commended by our Lord as having given more than all the rich men who had cast in of their abundance? These poor people near you coveted that commendation, and having no money to give, they brought out their only treasure, of the value of which they had no idea, and asked me to sell it for the cause which lay nearest the Master's heart, the seeking and saving of the lost, whether they be rascally Chinese, beastly Africans, or gospel-hardened Americans."

"Ha! Ha! I guess they changed their minds when you told them you could get twenty-five hundred dollars for their treasure, didn't they? That amount in the bank will relieve their neighbors of any responsibility for them for some time to come. I am glad my money will serve so good a purpose. Excellent old people, the Grangers. My, but I should like to have seen their eyes bulge when you told them of their good fortune!"

"Well, Mr. Schuyler, I just wish you had been there, for I truly think your eyes would have done the bulging. What will you say when I tell you that those people rejected with indignation every

proposal of mine for the placing of that money in the bank for their own use,—after giving a sum to missions,—and insisted that that pin had been given to the Lord regardless of its value, and to the Lord it must go? Their faces fairly glowed with the delight of being able to 'unlock' some missionaries and set them at work. The dear old lady actually rebuked me and said, 'We'll be none the poorer for parting with it at twenty-five hundred dollars than we should have been at five, and we should feel that we were robbing God if we said to him, "We would give you our only treasure if it was worth but five dollars, but twenty-five hundred is too much for you." God will provide for us, we are sure of that, and we've no need to begrudge him his good fortune, sir. At the most it won't go very far toward saving the Chinese from their superstition and the Africans from their degradation. I wish it was a hundred times as much.'"

There was no doubt at all about the "bulging" as the minister reported the strange interview. He gazed earnestly, prayerfully, into the face of this rich man, to whose past experience such thoughts as those of the Grangers had been totally unknown. Mr. Schuyler had inflated his chest as if about to speak, but had found vent for his feelings only in an explosive expulsion of the pent-up breath. For fully a minute he could only gaze helplessly into the keen yet tender eyes of his pastor, who seemed to him for the moment to

stand in the place of his acknowledged but unfollowed Master himself. Then he burst forth in a voice of agitation such as no one had ever heard from him before:

"Well! That certainly beats anything I ever heard. When you began to tell me of their decision, Mr. Stanton, I was on the point of crying out, 'The poor fools! they don't know what they're doing, and will have to have guardians appointed.' But the words did not get out before the conviction came upon me, like a bolt from the blue, that it wasn't a case of two poor fools, but of one rich fool, and that I am the man. And to think that I should have to be taught the lesson by the two paupers, to whom I have occasionally, in most cold-blooded fashion, doled out a pittance distinctly labeled 'Charity'! Here I have been for years pulling down my barns and building greater, and saying to my soul, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry, buy new automobiles and gems and pictures until thou hast more and finer than anyone else.' And the wonder is that the Lord did not say to me long ago, 'Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee.' I've never been rich toward God. I've taken a pride in keeping up the church as a most respectable club with a sort of insurance element in it. For respectability's sake I have contributed to public charities and reform movements; but I have never known the faintest approach to the

feeling which our poor old friends have expressed and evidently felt. I suppose you will tell me that I never can feel it, because in no imaginable circumstances would I have to practice their self-denial. Well, I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Stanton, I'm going to try for at least a taste of it. Just as a beginning, I should like to make the price of that pin five thousand dollars, half of it to start a bank account for those two aged saints. No; that won't work, for they would insist again on giving it all to missions. We must think of some other plan to keep them in comfort, from an anonymous source, while they give their twenty-five hundred to missions. And now for that pledge, which I know you have in your pocket, though I did not give you a chance either to confess or deny it this morning, let me have one and do a bit of figuring. In my circumstances there is no use trying to compete with the Grangers; but what is the proper rule, Mr. Stanton? You see this is an uncultivated part of my nature, and I don't know just how to go to work. You must tell me."

"The Apostle Paul laid down an excellent rule, which is sometimes called 'the scriptural rule of three for Christian giving.' It should be individual, systematic and proportional. 'Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper.'"

"But is there anyone who follows that rule, Mr. Stanton? If they do, it must be a mighty

small 'proportion' that they've settled on, to judge by the reports of mission boards!"

"Yes, Mr. Schuyler, there are many who are now giving according to that rule; but, as you say, even among them many are contented with 'a mighty small proportion.' While there are almost immeasurable advantages in adopting a certain percentage of income at the very beginning of life, as many now do, yet the great danger of the plan is that men will make that percentage a maximum instead of a minimum, and giving, say, a tenth of their incomes when they earn a thousand dollars a year, will continue to give only a tenth when they receive fifty thousand. Some one has well said that God does not measure our devotion by what we give, but by what we keep for ourselves. The gift of a hundred dollars from the thousand-dollar man means far more self-sacrifice than the gift of five thousand from the fifty-thousand-dollar man. Yet one of the saddest facts, Mr. Schuyler, is that the proportion of thousand-dollar men giving a hundred dollars is far larger than that of the fifty-thousand-dollar men giving five thousand dollars. Even Christian men associate sums of four to ten figures with business, with home education, with public works, with scientific research, with war, with amusement, with their own facilities for the luxurious worship of God, but seldom with charitable undertakings at home, and almost never with missions. But the day is coming when the giving of sums

of one to twenty millions of dollars by individuals to the work of evangelizing the world will seem as reasonable to the men of wealth in the church as similar gifts to education and research in America have come to seem, and when the church that spends from two to five hundred thousand dollars in the erection and adornment of its own building will feel that it must match the sum with an equal expenditure for world-wide missions in order to prove that it loves God supremely and loves its neighbor as itself. The spirit of the Crusades, but more wisely directed, will some day lay hold on the men and women and children of the church. It will seem no more of a waste to spend millions on equipment and campaigning and devote the richest young life of the church, for the redemption of a world from sin, than it now seems to put millions of the people's money and thousands of young lives into 'Dreadnaughts' and fighting force for the defense of our own borders against a possible foe. Rather will it be seen that the former is vastly the more acceptable to God. The man of means to-day does not stop to count his dollars when he wants something. The day will come when Christian men of means will so want to see the kingdom come in power that they will say to the workers on the field, 'Get the thing done, and send the bill to us.' But pardon me for running on in this way, Mr. Schuyler; the experiences of these last few weeks have so transfigured the whole idea of the church

and of the Christian life for me that I have become very enthusiastic and very optimistic. I know without any doubt that when Christian people come to realize the personal presence of Jesus Christ as their most intimate friend, the partner of joys and sorrows, of plans and undertakings and expenditures, these things of which I have spoken will most certainly come to pass."

"Well, Mr. Stanton, two hours ago you would not have made the slightest impression upon me by that sort of talk, for I should have laid it all to 'the cloth'; but now, if the Lord will be merciful to me a sinner against abundant light and above measure, I will take him as a partner for the rest of my life,—or, rather, I will ask him to let me be a partner with him in the work which he wishes to do in the world. I have never believed in hoarding money; but for some years now, even buying automobiles and Rembrandts and precious stones has not used up all my income, and my pile has been growing. For whom? The fifth of it would provide very comfortably for my children. My money has all come honestly, Mr. Stanton, though I must admit, in the light of what has occurred this morning, that I have not been making a strictly honest use of it. It will require considerable thinking to know what amends should be made. The giving to these big universities, which already have their tens of millions, strikes me as being a bit overdone, for the smaller colleges, no matter how good their work,

don't have half a chance, especially now that by one great fund a premium has been put on their secularization. Just the other day I was chuckling over one thing, and that is that though there are no other people in the world who insist so vigorously on securing a thoroughly educated, up-to-date ministry as these men of large means, yet scarcely any of them give a second serious thought to the equipment and endowment of our theological seminaries and Bible-training schools. Perhaps that is a good field for me, Mr. Stanton?"

"A good field it certainly is, Mr. Schuyler, if you pick out the seminaries which are grounding men well in the faith, instead of those which are merely, like the men of Athens, telling or hearing some new thing. The man who has millions to give should certainly do something for the smaller Christian colleges and the seminaries and Bible-training schools."

"With reference to your views, expressed a moment ago, as to large gifts for missions, I hardly know what to think. They are rather radical, to say the least. Millions and missions sound rather well together, yet somehow they don't seem to belong together. The heathen have never interested me a little bit; and yet our ancestors must have been once heathen of the heathen. It's a good thing that some one took an interest in heathen in those days, for I am sorely afraid that no ordinary process of evo-

lution would ever have given us the civilization of to-day. It does seem to stand to reason that if we have a good thing, like those lepers in the camp of the absconded Syrians, we should not simply enjoy it ourselves, but pass it on to others. But if so, why is it that there are so few who are doing it? Who ever heard of anyone giving a million to missions?"

"Twenty years ago no one ever had, Mr. Schuyler; but since then, particularly within the last ten years, quite a number of men have given a million or more to missions. The largest gift of all was a recent legacy of two and a quarter millions each to several boards of missions of our own church—some thirty millions, in all, to benevolence and education. My ideas may strike you as radical, but they are not original; and the number of their advocates is steadily and surely increasing as the church is coming to realize that missions are its chief end, and that education and other philanthropies attain their true object only as they contribute to the attainment of that supreme end, the filling of the world with the saving knowledge of God in Christ. Why, think of it, Mr. Schuyler; while Olympia University, one among many, is asking for another ten million dollars to add to its present tens of millions, in order to give a secular and largely specialized training to some hundreds of students, comparatively few of whom have really at heart the establishment of the kingdom of God, five million

dollars would endow a score of colleges and seminaries, in as many lands or as many quarters of huge countries like China or India, to raise up thousands of Christian men as leaders in the making of the new civilizations which are to have far larger parts in the forming of the world's future than they have had in the forming of its past. There is no country in the Occident to-day where history is making so rapidly as it is in China, Japan or Turkey. The great, the absolutely only, adequate defense against the 'yellow peril' is the speedy evangelization of the Orient, and that calls for thousands of men and millions of money. But what a trifle that would seem to the Christian world if we were only as patriotic for the kingdom of God as we are for our native lands!"

"Well, you certainly give a man as ignorant as I am of these matters a lot to think about. I never had thought enough about it to have any idea of the magnitude of the task, or of its importance either. According to your argument, it is not only a question of benevolence, but also of self-defense."

"It most assuredly is. If we are apprehensive to-day of what Japan, with her forty or fifty million people only fifty years out of the Middle Ages, may do to us in case of a disagreement, what may we not fear, twenty years from now, from China, with ten times the population, and every whit as virile and intelligent? The gospel is the only thing which can turn that peril into

a blessing. Nevertheless, the great question after all is the Orient's need of Jesus Christ, and our Master's command to us to meet that need. Never before was there such an opportunity for the church to use to utmost advantage the men and money given her by the Master for this very purpose."

"Do you think, then, that there is no limit to what should be given for these purposes? Will there be no danger of over-capitalizing the enterprise, or of pauperizing the natives?"

John Stanton laughed quietly as he replied: "You say you know but little about these matters, Mr. Schuyler; yet you know enough to have yourself said just now that mighty little was being given; so little, indeed, I might add, that the limit to wise giving about which you inquire may be regarded for the present as a purely academic question. When the church has attained to the giving, on an average, of ten times what she is giving now, it may be time to talk of limits; but at present the work already in operation needs two or three times what it receives, and the yet untouched work is many times that already undertaken. Steady progress is making in all mission fields in the direction of native self-support; but it has been forwarded as a matter of wise policy, and not merely under the constraint of necessity. The missions of our own church have made a conservative estimate of the new property required for present work, and it

amounts to more than three million and a half. Add to that what will be needed for advance work in the next few years and you have about fifteen million dollars—a large sum from the point of view of amounts hitherto given, but a mere trifle when compared with the church's wealth, or its expenditures in other directions. It is just about the sum which one church in New York proposes to put into its single house of worship, a sum well within the power of a dozen or more individual Christians to give; yet it would equip the world-wide missions of a great church like ours with all the schools, colleges, seminaries, hospitals, residences and chapels which it is likely to need in fulfilling its responsibility toward the non-Christian world. Some Christian man is going to get the vision some day and demonstrate his belief that this is the greatest work in the world: it's surely coming. Ten years ago those great bequests of which I spoke would have received little commendation and much criticism from the press. But missions have so largely made good, and have been so fully investigated by so many unprejudiced men, that the sneering and indifference of years gone by are giving way to a general respect and real interest. While there would, no doubt, be some who would call the giver of twenty millions to missions a fool, a large majority of the men whose opinion is best worth considering would style him a benefactor of the race."

"Well, when I got up this morning I should

certainly have been among those to call him a fool, Mr. Stanton; and I feel even now as if you, or the Grangers, or some one, must have bewitched me to convince me of the soundness of your logic."

"That is quite scriptural, Mr. Schuyler, for Paul said long ago, 'If any man thinketh that he is wise among you in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise.' You will be interested to know that our Foreign Mission Board is now not only planning what it might do with gifts of millions, but definitely planning what it will do in that confidently expected early future when the day of small things in giving to missions will give place to the day of large things, when the work will be done on a scale adequate to its vastness and importance. The Home Board too has set forth a programme which calls for and contemplates a similar awakening to liberality."

"Well, as I said a moment ago, you have given me much to think about; and I am surprised to find myself grateful to you, to the Grangers and to God, for the new line of thought and interest. Let me draw you a check for the Grangers now, and if you will leave the pledge blanks and envelopes with me, I will send in my pledge tomorrow."

Thankful beyond words for the strange providential leading which had brought about such results in a single morning, John Stanton carried the check to the jubilant old couple, who held it

reverently for a moment and then handed it back to the pastor for the Lord's treasury. When Mrs. Stanton was told the good news her face grew radiant over the story, and together they poured out full hearts in thanksgiving and in prayer for the man who had so suddenly made up his mind to be rich toward God, as well as for the happy couple who had so lavishly done what they could. When Mr. Schuyler's pledges came in the next day, they found that he had doubled his previous pledge for local support, and promised one hundred dollars a week for benevolence. Three or four weeks afterward the church and community were electrified by the report that, after much reading of missionary literature and correspondence with the boards, Vincent Schuyler had become the first Christian to do for missions, during his own lifetime, as liberal things as several were doing for education and research, by giving outright to the Board of Foreign Missions ten million dollars, and dividing between the boards working at home another ten million dollars. And no longer did time hang heavy on the hands of Mr. Schuyler.

CHAPTER IX

A PARISH ABROAD

AMONG the various experiences of the several pairs of canvassers none was more striking than that of Elder Ogden and Trustee Waterson in their interview with Banker Harden. They had completed their entire round of visits most successfully before they ventured to "beard the lion in his den." But all the week they had made him and their visit to him a matter of earnest prayer; so that it was in no hopeless mood that they entered his office some time after banking hours on Friday afternoon, Mr. Ogden, as a particularly intimate friend, having agreed to do most of the talking. He had made up his mind just what course to pursue; but on taking up an early afternoon paper had run upon an item which had radically changed his whole purpose. With this paper in his pocket, he greeted the banker with far more assurance than that with which he had started on his rather disagreeable errand.

"Well, Harden, how's the money market?" he sang out in his cheery, half-quizzical fashion, as he shook hands with the banker, who looked anything but responsive to the cheer of the greeting, and replied rather gruffly:

"If you two men have come to perform your duty by me in the matter of begging pledges for

missions, you've hit on anything but the psychological moment to do it. You wouldn't have got a cent from me at any time, as I have said over and over again; but you might have found me ready to say a more amiable 'No' if you had come even half an hour ago. Look at that, will you!" And he thrust into Ogden's hands a copy of the paper which the latter had just been reading. "You can't trust anyone these days in the handling of trust funds. Our city hospital stands to lose at least half a million through the rascality of that young Baynes, who has apparently been misappropriating trust funds for the last two years, when everyone thought there was no more reliable young man in the city. Rapidly increasing personal luxury, speculation in stocks and real estate, led to suspicion and investigation, with the result that you see. It is perfectly amazing that men cannot see that what has been entrusted to them to use for another is not theirs to use for themselves, except just enough to pay expenses. It would seem as if that principle was sufficiently fundamental to prevent such shipwrecks as this. There was a little more than a million dollars put in Baynes's hands to administer for the Rinker Hospital, and he has, little by little, helped himself to about half of it. The institution will be just about paralyzed, the man himself is ruined for life, his family blighted and impoverished; and all because he once began keeping what did not belong to him."

"It's awful, awful!" heartily responded Mr. Ogden. "I'm sorry as can be for the hospital and the family. It reminds me of another case, some time ago, when an estate of many millions was left to the care of a large number of executors, every one of whom gave bond to administer the trust solely for the interest of the only son. The various interests of the estate were divided up among these men, each to look after his own share and make final report at a set time. When it came time for the settlement with the son, it was discovered that all but one of the executors had treated the share of the estate committed to him as his own, spent it as he pleased, and willed most of the balance to his own children, so that not a hundredth part of the estate ever came into the hands of the son."

"What! Do you mean to say that that sort of thing was ever actually done anywhere in this country of ours, Ogden?" gasped Mr. Harden. "Surely such men could not escape the clutches of the law all that time, and actually have the hardihood to try to pass on another man's estate to their own children!"

"Yes; and the most amazing thing about it was that the law allowed them to do so, and public opinion commended them as superior financiers; and they are at large as respected citizens in the community to-day."

"Say, Ogden, what sort of hoax are you giving me? You surely don't expect me to swallow all

that? There isn't a state in this country where it could happen."

"Nevertheless it has happened, and happened in this state and city, and you are one of the executors, Harden."

"Have you gone crazy, Ogden, or are you just trying to jolly me in this rather unusual fashion?"

"No, Harden, I speak forth the words of truth and soberness. And I dare to do it because I was in the same boat with you until a short time ago. God made us executors of his estate for his Son Jesus Christ; and we have called his money our money, have appropriated it to our own selfish purposes, and what we couldn't use ourselves we have willed to our children; and we have not given him, whose stewards we are, even one per cent of what belongs to him. Talk about young Baynes misappropriating trust funds and score him as he ought to be scored; but the fact of the matter is that we have been just as guilty as he since we first began to plan our lives for ourselves. We have consistently and persistently robbed God, and yet apparently maintained our self-respect and retained the respect of others,—naturally enough, because in condemning us they would but have condemned themselves. I for one am done with this sort of thing, and, aside from a reasonable expense account, shall appropriate to myself no more of the trust fund committed to me to administer for Jesus Christ. And

I tell you, Harden, it makes all the difference in the world to feel that one's hands are clean. I have cared too much for you as an old friend quietly to endure seeing you lose all this joy and peace. You need not try to convince me that you have had peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Spirit during these past few weeks."

"Well, Ogden, I shall have to confess that you have caught me just about as King David was caught by the prophet. I never thought that I was setting a trap for myself by mentioning that item in to-day's paper; but the fact is that I've been 'kicking against the goad' for some time. I wasn't willing to acknowledge it; and indeed I never realized that my case was so bad as you have shown it to be this afternoon; but I've been irritable enough, goodness knows,—and you could probably testify. The fact was that the sword entered pretty deeply the day that Dr. Sears made his parting thrust at me in this office, several weeks ago. The change in my wife and daughter has only served to make it rankle; and when you came in this afternoon with a sort of bound-to-win expression on that face of yours, I felt desperate. But my weapon of defense has been turned most skillfully against me, and I shall have to plead guilty to the indictment of having systematically robbed God by misappropriating trust funds. It has always been *my* money, *my* time, *my* strength; if I chose to give any of it to the church, it was *my* liberality; if I did anything for the poor,

or for home missions, it was *my* kindness and patriotism; and I did nothing for those beyond the seas for whom Christ died because they did not directly appeal to me, and money spent on them seemed wasted. But the other day, before I realized what I was reading, I got into the midst of an article on the revolutionary changes which have taken place during the last few years in China, either directly through missionary effort or in rivalry of it, and it was so interesting I couldn't lay it down. It showed me that I was altogether mistaken about the waste of money when such wonders have been accomplished with the pittance the church has given for the purpose. Yet I tried still to make myself believe that it was none of my business. But you have been too much for me to-day, Ned, and have caught me with guile. As long as the wisdom of the serpent has had in it the harmlessness of the dove, I'll forgive you. But seriously, what's the best way to make good those defalcations of mine? Wouldn't it be a good plan to get you to help me change my will, so that I can leave something to the cause to atone for my delinquencies? Wouldn't it do the work more good to have a large lump sum with which to undertake some large enterprise, rather than have it in smaller sums that would be insufficient for anything important?"

When the banker got to this point, the lawyer broke into a hearty laugh.

"Good," he cried; "this appeals to the lawyer in me,—this last proposition,—and tickles my funny-bone as well, though you're by no means the first to make the suggestion. I know you'll excuse me for thinking it funny, when you just turn the thing around for yourself. Carry out our figure: young Baynes is caught red-handed, confesses the whole thing, has considerable of the money in stocks and bonds to make restitution, but asks the judge if he does not think it will be better for the hospital to have him enjoy the proceeds for the rest of his life and will the money to the institution at his death! There may be more of it by that time, and they can use it for a new building, instead of squandering it now on current expenses! And it will have the further advantage of giving us lawyers a chance to pull the will to pieces and secure some of that fat sum for the sorrowing widow! By all means, Harden, let it be a post-mortem restitution!"

Rattled off in jolly raillery of his old friend, who knew well his genuine good-will, as well as his keen wit, this speech set the banker off into the heartiest laugh in which he had indulged in many a day; and he replied:

"I declare, Ogden, you are certainly an adept at turning a man inside out, showing him his own soul, and clearing every mist from before his eyes. Tell the truth, I haven't done much laughing for some time, and it feels good. It's all right: I shall not give you the job of making a new

will for me. But, you know, there are lots of men that reason that way, and never get a taste of self-sacrifice themselves, but leave it all to their heirs. I rather think it would be better for those heirs presumptive to see the estate kept so low by the honest payment of debts to God that they couldn't reasonably do so much 'presuming.' Might make some of them indulge a little more in good honest toil, eh? And you are undoubtedly right, too, in thinking that our first great duty is toward our own generation, for we do not know for sure that there will ever be another one; and for lack of my help in connection with this one, the next may be in such a condition that ten times as much help will not save it. But, do you know, there is one thing I don't believe I'm quite equal to yet. I'm more than half afraid that my daughter Lena is feeling her duty toward the present generation in the form of a call to the foreign field herself. She hasn't said a word, but I've seen the look in her eyes. Giving the money and giving one's own daughter are two very different things, Ogden, and I'm not ready to let her go."

"'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son'; and I believe you will be given the grace to give your daughter, if she really feels called of God to go, and you will be proud that you have a daughter so rarely fitted for that great work. But it will be years yet before she would go."

"Of course I wouldn't want to fight against

God; there's no satisfaction in that, as I know too well already; but I hope she'll find her work here at home. I won't think of it any more than I have to. But what about those pledges? Let me see one. That work of restitution for the past I shall certainly do, probably by erecting some new buildings, or endowing some educational institution. That would be like leaving the money in my will, except that the money will be working for the Lord instead of for me, and you lawyers won't get your chance. I shall consult the boards as to the best thing to do. Let me see: how much am I giving to the support of the local church? Oh, I see; you have my one-sided pledge here. Two dollars a week for the support of minister, choir, sexton, upkeep of church, maintenance of Sunday school, etc., etc., a hundred dollars a year. Humph! my automobile costs me a thousand; my house four thousand; my servants another thousand, not counting food. That won't do; let me change it to ten dollars. That will look a little better. Now for the benevolences. Home missions in all their variety, local, state, national; foreign missions to the church's million heathen. Well, I certainly wouldn't have the face to spend less on the world's evangelization than I do on my automobile. We'll put down twenty dollars a week for the present. That would come pretty close to supporting a missionary in each field, wouldn't it? I'll just make it an even twenty-five, and

then we can be sure to have our own missionaries. I like to know just what my money is doing. What do you think, you two, with this new condition of things in the church, couldn't we have a definite parish assigned to us in the home mission field, and another abroad, in which we could take a very special interest? Some of us might visit them after they were started. I am sure it would make us all feel as if we had a much more real part in the work. You just carry that suggestion to your Missionary Committee, with the compliments of Edward Harden, and see if they don't stare! I must excuse myself now for a directors' meeting; but I thank you with all my heart for 'bearding the lion in his den.' Good-by."

"Well, we certainly kept the best for the last this time!" exclaimed Mr. Waterson when they were once more upon the street. "The appearance of that story of young Baynes in the afternoon paper seems almost like a special providence."

"It certainly did make our way easier," replied the jubilant lawyer; "but the Spirit of God had been working mightily with Harden for a long time; and we were directed to 'the psychological moment.' Suppose we keep the secret until our committee gets together, and spring a good big surprise on them."

"All right; I am agreed. Our work is done, and it has not been half so unpleasant as I ex-

pected to find it. Isn't it interesting,—almost startling,—to see how the birth of zeal for missions almost invariably increases interest in the support of the local church?"

"Yet it is one of the axioms of Christian mathematics that scattering increases and withholding impoverishes. But the carnal mind will not accept even ocular demonstration of that fact."

The two men separated, after their week of association in this work, with a new sense of the power of God and the sacredness of the life of a Christian.

Elder Wentworth and Ralph Jackson had been paired for the work, and they had met with the varied experience that might have been expected. To them had been assigned, on account of the elder's popularity, and Mr. Jackson's former attitude toward missions, a considerable proportion of the members of the congregation not members of the church, who were to be visited; and they were much encouraged with the result. Indeed, two of those whom they visited were so impressed, first, with the world's need of evangelization, and then with the incongruity of contributing to that work while themselves possessed of that Gospel 'but having denied the power thereof,' that they announced their intention of uniting with the church at the earliest opportunity. In two other cases the visitors were surprised to discover that families which they supposed entirely unconnected were in actual possession of letters from

another church which had never been presented. Probably their most interesting experience was their interview with Russell Seward, whom Elder Wentworth had chosen as his special object of prayer and effort. He was among the first whom they visited, choosing an evening when he would be at home, rather than seeking him at Doran and Hutchins', where his time was not his own. He had not yet reached home for his supper when they arrived at eight o'clock, and they feared that the time might not prove auspicious; but Mrs. Seward urged them to remain, saying:

"I would give anything to be able to draw Russell out of himself, for I am very anxious about him. I am quite sure he has no bad habits and is not wasting his money; yet I will say in confidence to two old friends like yourselves that he finds it a great deal harder to spend money than he ought with his income. I never used to think him close; but there is certainly something wrong with him, and I cannot find out what it is. He doesn't seem to care to go to church as he used to, and appears depressed most of the time. His work keeps him very closely; but I sometimes wonder if he is not doing extra work. I cannot get his confidence; so if you can, you will be doing me a very great favor."

"I, too, have been troubled about him, Mrs. Seward," said Elder Wentworth. "I know he is not happy, and when that is so with a Christian, it is sure proof that something is wrong. I'm

pretty certain that it is congestion of the heart; and there's a remedy for that; so I believe we can help him out, and you'll be very welcome to any help it brings to you."

Steps were heard at the door, and in walked Russell Seward, looking both weary and gloomy. His face brightened a little at seeing the two old friends, and he tried to bid them a cheery welcome; but it was not much of a success. Mrs. Seward hastened to set on the supper, having waited for her own that she might keep her husband company. As no persuasions could induce the visitors to partake of a second supper, they did their best to enliven the meal with pleasantries and items of news. When the table had been cleared and Mrs. Seward had withdrawn to the kitchen to wash the dishes, Mr. Seward broke out:

"I suppose you have come to see me about the new plans in the church. Well, anything will be better than going on as I am going now, and your coming here this evening moves me to make a clean breast of my trouble, even if it does drive you away. I cannot take an interest in the church and do for it here, and help to send the gospel abroad, because I'm not a Christian; that's all. You both know that, while my income is not large, yet I am not spending it all. No; the fact is that I have gotten so into the grip of the laying-up habit that I grudge every cent that I spend on the house or our living. I have about

ten thousand dollars laid by now where it brings me five per cent interest; and I love that capital and interest more than I love the lost; which cannot mean anything else than that I love it more than I do Jesus Christ. It seems to me clear proof that I'm not a Christian, and I think the best thing I can do is just to have my name dropped from the church roll, and then, perhaps, my conscience won't charge me so often with hypocrisy, and my burden will be a bit lighter."

Elder Wentworth rose from his seat, went over to where Russell Seward sat with bowed head, put his arm affectionately over his shoulder and said:

"I feel like saying to you, as Ananias did to Saul, Brother Russell, receive thy sight. You have certainly been stricken down by a revelation of the impossibility of serving two masters; like Saul, you have been the strong man misusing his strength under the influence of an earthly vision; and it is the day of your opportunity to become the strong man glorifying his strength under the influence of a heavenly vision. We won't argue the question as to whether you have been a Christian heretofore or not; your present misery is certainly the best of proof that the Holy Spirit is still laboring with you to be one from this time forth. You cannot drive away that frightful love of money; and it is quite as certain that you can never be happy with it; but there is nothing more certain than that Jesus Christ can conquer it and

take its place in your heart, so that henceforth money will always be means and not end. Suppose we all get on our knees and see if the light doesn't come: Dear Heavenly Father, our brother here has lost his vision of the loveliness of Jesus, and has been charmed with the glitter of gold and silver. Open his eyes, Lord, that he may see; clear away all the deluding mists, that he may see Jesus only; and then may all life's values assume their right proportions in his mind and heart."

For several moments none of the three spoke, as all continued kneeling. Then in broken utterance Russell Seward prayed for himself:

"O Heavenly Father, I am not worthy to be called thy son. I have taken thy bounty and made an idol out of it, which I have worshiped in thy stead. I have done despite to thy spirit of grace, and lightly esteemed the love of thy Son Jesus Christ. Thou knowest how wretched it has made me, and my wife, and my friends. But thou art merciful, and I plead for thy forgiveness, and for more and more of the vision of Christ's loveliness until I so truly love him with all my heart that nothing can ever take his place. Teach me what to do and what to undo, and give me thy peace that it may become my power for a life of humble, Christian service. Only in Jesus' name dare I ask it. Amen."

As they rose from their knees, Russell Seward lifted a radiant face, from which the clouds had

all flown, grasped his friends' hands and thanked them for coming.

"Now we're ready for business," said he, going to a little safe in a corner of the room, and taking out some papers. "The first thing to do is to knock off the head of my favorite deity, Mammon, and then we'll make use of his carcass for other purposes than worship. Now, here are two thousand dollars in five per cent bonds, which shall be made over to our pastor for proper division among the benevolent agencies of the church. Here are two thousand dollars more, which shall be used in putting this house in livable shape, and getting Mrs. Seward some decent clothes and other things that she needs. The rest we'll lay up for a rainy day; but my love for it is gone, and it will get no more worship. That, with the insurance I carry, will keep my wife from want if I should be taken first. Now, out with your pledges, brethren, and we'll see what we can do. 'For Current Expenses,' 'For Ourselves'; yes, that's what it is, paying, not giving: we ought to be able to pay one dollar a week, I think. 'For Benevolences,' 'For Others,' and in the last analysis, for Christ; we certainly can't give less than we do for ourselves. But that includes local charity, mission work all over the United States, and the evangelization of the world. Fifty odd dollars for local church, fifty more for home missions, and fifty for foreign—one hundred and fifty in all: why, even at that it isn't a

tenth of my income! Well, there'll be some special calls. I'll put down two dollars a week for benevolences, and if I don't give at least a tenth during the year, I'll make a special offering. How does that strike you?"

The eyes of Elder Wentworth, and even those of the less emotional Ralph Jackson, were moist as they congratulated Russell Seward on his new-found happiness. Mr. Jackson exclaimed that it had just occurred to him that, on the new order of things, the church could support a station at home and one abroad.

"In that case," said Mr. Seward, "it would be a great satisfaction to me to have my two thousand dollars divided and used for a definite share in the equipment of those new stations. I should like to have it put somewhere where it would have to work as hard for the lost as I have worked to earn it."

Mightily encouraged by this success, the two canvassers went their way to other homes and offices, growing themselves in earnestness and sympathy as they found how many were simply waiting for the personal touch, to exhibit a better side to natures apparently quite insensible to the appeal of a world's need. In more than one case they found the new idea of "a parish abroad," a definite personal responsibility at home and abroad, a powerful means of securing far larger subscriptions than would otherwise have been forthcoming. At every opportunity they passed

on the suggestion to other canvassers, who found in it similar effectiveness. The thought of having the portraits of their own missionaries, and the pictures of the buildings, in the parlors of the church, and of hearing the direct reports of the work, gave a reality and a zest to the matter which they had never before associated with missions; it began to seem their work, and they were ready to do their share. The idea grew upon the workers, and after the midweek service they held a special meeting for conference with one another and with the pastor. It was already quite evident that the church would be able to undertake the entire support of one or more mission stations. Some one ventured the inquiry whether it would not be more broadening to mind and heart to contribute to the general funds of the boards for world-wide work; but it was the general consensus of opinion that, human nature being what it is, the personal touch would add so much keenness to the church's interest as to insure far larger and more universal contribution to the work, and more intelligent prayer for its every need and opportunity. Determining to await only the early conclusion of the canvass, before conferring with the boards as to definite fields, the pastor hailed with thanksgiving this new sign of the presence and power of the living Christ among his people.

The two ladies of the Missionary Committee naturally made their visits together. Mrs.

Wentworth loved Gertrude Austin almost as well as she loved her own daughter Grace; and no pair could have been more congenial for this work, the matron to give dignity, the maiden to add winsomeness. Sometimes it was the dignity which won the day, sometimes the winsomeness; but won it was in every case. It required two visits to the home of Miss Greene, whom Mrs. Wentworth had taken as her "special object." At the first visit, during the early part of the week, they had knocked at the door of the little old cottage tucked away among the more pretentious houses on the chief residence street, bidding defiance to their pretensions in much the same fashion in which the little old lady, its owner, held up her head among the residents of the street, regardless of the faded glories of her once prosperous estate. To hold the place, she really pinched in money and in food, but resented every suggestion that the price which her affluent neighbors were eager to give for the unsightly old place would keep her in more than comfort on another street for the rest of her days. As far as she was fond of anyone, she was fond of Mrs. Wentworth; and Gertrude Austin had tried more than once to cheer her loneliness. Both, therefore, were given as cordial a welcome as she ever gave anybody; but they found to their dismay that it was no easy matter to introduce the object of their visit. Mrs. Wentworth asked Miss Greene how regularly her health had permitted

her to attend the church services recently, and received the reply:

"Well, I guess I haven't grown so decrepit yet but what I can get out to the house of God. There was a time when I didn't want to go at all, because I always had to sit way back on one side, or else plumb under the preacher's nose. But when the people had the good sense and piety to do away with respect of persons in the house of God by abolishing those pew rents, I was able to take my old place among the first families of the church, and sit in as good a pew as any of them, if I couldn't any longer pay two hundred dollars for it, as my father used to do. I know they don't like it; but they'll have to learn that I have just as good blood in my veins as they have in theirs; and lots better than some. I can hold my head up yet, if the old estate has gone to grief. Do you know, Mrs. Wentworth, they're still after me for this old place where my father and grandfather were born and died; and they seem to think I'll have to come to it before long—sort o' starved into it, you know. What do you suppose Judge Melrose offered me for the place the other day? Not a cent short of twenty thousand dollars. Of course, the house isn't worth anything to speak of; but he wants the land. I wouldn't let him have it for twice that, just to show him that money isn't everything in this world—that family pride isn't easily crushed."

"But just think, Miss Greene, how much more

comfortable you might be in that little vacant house next to ours, for example, living on the interest of that money, and able to do so much more for others than you can now do!" urged Mrs. Wentworth, looking unlimited pity into the eyes of the proud woman. "You know how much we all think of you; but I can't help wondering sometimes whether family pride is worth everything else in the world put together. Forgive me if I speak too plainly in saying that I don't think what our ancestors were or did is half so important to us as what we ourselves are and are doing. Are our good works honoring our ancestors and our God?"

"Oh! now I see what you came for: it wasn't to see me and cheer me up, as you used to, but just to try to get me to give to missions. I haven't three hundred dollars a year to keep up this place and feed and clothe myself. I can't bring myself to give up the old family habit of always putting silver in the collection plate for church support, but that five dollars and twenty cents a year is every last cent I can pinch out of my income to give away; so if that's what you've come for, you'll have your labor for your pains."

"O Miss Greene!" put in Gertrude Austin, "these last few weeks in our church have been bringing us all so much joy that we truly thought we should be adding to your joy by telling you how we got ours, and inviting you to try the same plan. It's partnership with Jesus in his redemp-

tive work that brings the cheer that is most satisfying. Don't you believe it?"

"It's all very easy for you to talk about it, Gertrude Austin, for you never had to deny yourself anything since you were born. It is very different for one who, like myself, has once had plenty, but is now reduced to grinding poverty."

"Are you, Miss Greene?" slowly asked Mrs. Wentworth, rising to take her departure, and again looking searchingly, yet tenderly, into the eyes of the sensitive little woman, whom, after formal farewells, they left standing in her own doorway, gazing mournfully after them.

"Do you think we shall have to give her up, Mother Wentworth?" asked Gertrude, as they walked away. "She is one of the charter members of this church, and it seems a great pity to leave her out."

"We have done our part, Gertie, and we'll just leave the Lord to do his now, dear. I have an idea that he has used us to make an impression, and we must simply keep right on praying. Let me see, the next person on our list is Mrs. Bell, two blocks north and one block east; also a small house, but where small houses look more comfortable than they do here. Poor Miss Greene, how she is shutting herself out of the joy of her Lord!"

Mrs. Bell was a widow who supported herself and her daughter, a girl of twelve years, by dressmaking. Her services were much in demand

and she earned a modest competence, realizing to the full that it had been earned and must not be wasted. She had been a faithful member of the congregation, contributing moderately but regularly to the support of the church; but she had never united with the church nor given anything to its benevolences, unless it might be an occasional nickel in the collections. On the previous Sabbath she had turned in her pledge for current expenses, leaving the other half blank. She was hard at work with her sewing when the visitors arrived, but welcomed them heartily, and when they were seated apologized for working while she talked, saying:

"I know you will forgive me if I keep right on with my sewing, for I've promised this work tonight, and it will be as much as I am worth to get it done. But, as you know, my fingers and my tongue are quite independent of one another, and I'm delighted to see you. I hope that last suit I made you has given you good satisfaction, Miss Austin."

"Oh, yes, Mrs. Bell; you always fit me beautifully," replied Gertrude. "In these days, when it is so hard to find a dressmaker of any kind, I often wonder how you can afford to give so much attention to the little details; but you never seem to slight any of them, and your customers highly appreciate it."

"Well, Miss Austin, when I was a girl my mother used to say to me over and over again,

'Whether you do big things or whether you do little, always do your best.' I used to fret a bit over the advice, but it's been my salvation. Whenever I've been tempted to skimp my work mother's words and her own example have always come before me; and whatever success I have made I owe to her. She was a good Christian if there ever was one."

"I don't suppose that means that you have any doubt as to the existence of such a person, does it?" asked Gertrude, half laughing.

"Not exactly, in the presence of yourself and Mrs. Wentworth," replied Mrs. Bell. "There's no doubt about you two; but I can't say as much for some other members of your church. If they would pay their debts, I should not have to work so hard, and would perhaps be able to indulge in some benevolence, as well as paying my dues for the support of the church. I always believed in being just before being generous, especially when your injustice may prevent some one else from being generous with what rightly belongs to him. Perhaps you'll hardly believe it, but I have every bit of eight hundred dollars now on my books against members of our church, and some of it has been there for two years or more. I will say this, however, that there was twice that much charged two months ago, and it is wonderful how many have come and paid me recently, some of them making very humble apologies for their neglect, too."

"Wonderful, isn't it, how a realization of the presence of Jesus Christ straightens out all sorts of crooked places in our lives!" exclaimed Mrs. Wentworth. "A few moments' view of him gives us such a view of ourselves as we have never had before, doesn't it?"

"Do you really think that is what has made the difference, Mrs. Wentworth? I wondered a good deal about it. Certainly, a thing which will do that is worth having. I don't know much about that sort of thing. My mother, honest and sensible as she was, never had it. My husband, straight as an arrow, never had it. They both tried to live as well as they knew how, but they never joined the church because they saw lots of folks in the church who were not so straight as they were; but, to tell the truth, I have never been quite satisfied with that idea. The fact that there are paste diamonds doesn't make the real thing a bit less beautiful, or less valuable; and being honest isn't the only thing in life."

"O Mrs. Bell! I am so glad to hear you talk this way, for we have been wishing and praying that you might find Jesus Christ all we have found him, and all we are going to find him. Life would be twice as well worth living with Jesus as Saviour and Master and ever-present Friend. Honesty then becomes a vastly broader and higher thing, when it glorifies, not merely us, but our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father in heaven. His kingdom and his righteousness

become the first thing in our lives, and his fatherly care adds every other needful thing. You know the gospel, that Christ died that we might live; it was the great outpouring of the Father's love. Accept it, let it fill you, and it will bring you a joy such as you have never experienced. Christ wants you! We want you!"

The sewing had ceased for some minutes: the tears began to fall on the strangely idle hands and the quiet work. Mrs. Bell bowed her head on the shoulder of the dear old lady, who had drawn her chair closer to her as she spoke her loving desire; and then and there gave herself to her newly found Lord. After a few moments of silent prayer by all three, the dressmaker raised a smiling face, saying:

"I can never thank you two dear friends enough for coming to see me this afternoon. I feel that I can love people now: before I merely tried to be just to them, and, of course, I didn't succeed, for I can see now that a part of our just debts is just that very love that we don't give. I feel as if one of the things I must do first is to get back that half pledge I made out on Sunday and fill in the other half, whether people pay their debts to me or not. Do you know who has them in charge?"

Mrs. Wentworth smilingly drew forth Mrs. Bell's pledge and told her of their errand in coming to her. A pen was sought, the blank filled out, and shown to Mrs. Wentworth, who ex-

claimed at the amount—one dollar a week for benevolences:

"You understand, do you, Mrs. Bell, that that is so much a week? Are you sure you can afford to give that much?"

"When I find I can't afford it, I'll change it; but, you see, I too have some back debts to pay, Mrs. Wentworth; and for church and benevolences I am certainly not going to give less than the old Jews gave. Have you any more of those pledges with you? I want to talk with my little girl about it and try to teach her love as well as honesty."

The visitors left the house, marveling once more at the power of God's Spirit, and went home to other duties. That evening Mrs. Wentworth was greatly surprised to receive a note from Miss Greene, which read as follows:

"*My dear Mrs. Wentworth:* After you and Miss Austin had left me this afternoon I felt so ashamed of myself for my treatment of you that I could not sit down quietly to anything, but just paced up and down, realizing more clearly every minute the foolishness and even wickedness of that old family pride, which was making me miserable, disagreeable, ridiculous and useless. When I had sat for a while in sackcloth and ashes, I saw Judge Melrose pass the house and enter his own door. A few minutes later I went over to his house, apologized to him for my very disagreeable

behavior in the past, and told him that I would be very glad to accept his offer for my house and land. And what do you suppose he said? He looked at me in the most amused fashion for a minute, and then said: 'I guess you must have been struck by the Presbyterian reform movement, too, Miss Delia? Their whirlwind campaign seems likely to whirl the whole town into line. They've got me, too. I've been dodging them for weeks, but found it was no use and surrendered to-day. After they get through with my purse and bank account I don't know that there will be enough left to buy your place; but if it's going to help you also to reform I shall have to manage some way. What do you think? They've got me to build a boarding school and support a missionary teacher at the new station the church is going to start. Ha, ha! it makes me feel as if I was young and just going to work again; so don't be scared at my unwonted levity, Miss Delia. We'll see about the papers to-morrow.'

"I have never seen Judge Melrose in such a mood in my life. Now, please forgive me for being so disagreeable to-day and come again to-morrow, both of you, if you have time. Bring your pledges, and we'll see what we can do.

"Apologetically yours,

"DELIA GREENE."

The two ladies gladly found time the next day,

were given a warm welcome, and carried away with them another pledge of one dollar a week, together with a commission to engage the pretty little cottage next to Mrs. Wentworth's for the early occupation of the woman who had concluded that there was much more joy in keeping heart high than head.

CHAPTER X

A MISSIONARY BOND

A WEEK of earnest effort practically completed the canvass. On the last day but one of that week, in the evening, the canvassers met to confer, and it was found that but five of the resident members of the church had thus far proved recalcitrant. These were reassigned to other members of the committee for the following morning, and to still others for the afternoon, should the morning appeal prove unavailing. Special prayer was asked for these final efforts, and when the time came on Saturday evening for the final report, there was but one member of the church whose pledge had not been secured, and that was Mr. Talbot, the druggist.

"Let's go in a body and carry him by storm," suggested Mr. Gilbert. "It won't do to leave him out, and the fact is that more than a pledge for benevolence hangs on this matter with him."

The novel idea took with the committee, and the twenty-one visitors, including the pastor, marched two by two in procession to the drug store, where they found a considerable number of Saturday night customers and loungers, some of whom looked on with wonder, while others suspected the motive of the visit. It was quite evident that Mr. Talbot more than suspected.

He fumbled with the string of the parcel which he was doing up for a customer, but after it was finished, at the request of Mr. Stanton, he invited the company into his office in the rear and shut the door on the curious, saying:

"This is certainly an unusual and an unexpected pleasure, to have a visit from pastor, session, deacons and trustees, all at once, and on Saturday night. What can I do for you, ladies and gentlemen?"

"We are not seeking any favor for ourselves, Mr. Talbot," replied Mr. Stanton; "but the fact is that our church, with a minority of only one, has voted to do the work for which Christ established his church in the world, namely, to go or send into all the world to preach the gospel to every creature; and we cannot rest content until that vote is made unanimous. You are now the only resident member of this church without a share in this work, and we cannot believe that one member can be right and the other eight hundred wrong. So we ask you to tell us, the officers of church and congregation, why you are unwilling to join with us in carrying out the mission of Christ and his church. We are all friends, as you know, Mr. Talbot, and fellow-members of the body of Christ."

A minute or two passed before the druggist made any reply; then he said slowly:

"When you came in this evening, Mr. Stanton and the rest of you, I was strongly inclined to

resent the visit as an impertinence. Once early in the week, and twice to-day, I had already refused to make any pledge toward the benevolences of the church, giving the reason that I did not believe in pledges for such things. But your courteous yet strongly reproving words to-night have brought to a climax the inward struggles of several weeks. The reason I gave my visitors was only an excuse. You are all my friends, and I will tell you without fear. The fact of the matter is that my business has been accusing me so severely since that first day when our pastor told his vision that I have never had an easy conscience from that day to this. The drug business looks like a clean business, and, indeed, it may be so, but in too many cases the clean exterior covers a multitude of rottennesses. Look here," and he opened a door in the rear of the room, where they beheld a genteel secret bar. "There is where most of my money has been made. And my soda clerk can take a wink as to a 'stick' in soft drinks as quickly as anyone. And many of my finest confections are filled with liquor. The cigars and cigarettes bought by young people here are impoverishing them financially and physically, and the amount of adulteration now common in the putting up of prescriptions is enough to send a man to prison for life, if discovered. Sunday is one of the busiest days of the week for us; not in medicines, but in cigars, soda water and candy. Do you wonder that I have not re-

joiced in the realization of the presence of Christ, or been eager to send the gospel to others? If I am going to be a Christian, I have either got to clean up this business or get out of it. With competition what it is, I doubt if I can live on the business when it is cleaned up; but what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? There will be a dead loss on some perishable things prepared for to-morrow's trade; but I will get ready a notice at once to post on the door, that nothing will be sold here on Sunday except medicines, and those only during limited hours. There will be some disgusted customers to-morrow."

"I believe the Christians in town will rally to the support of a druggist who takes such a stand as that, and make up to you for some of your losses with increased trade in other lines," said the pastor, warmly grasping the hand of Mr. Talbot, who, however, smiled grimly, as he remarked:

"What will you say, Mr. Stanton, when I tell you that fully half of my Sunday sales, outside of medicines, are to members of the churches and their children? Why, it is quite common to hear the Sunday-school children, coming in here for candy and soda, joking about their needing these things more than the heathen do missionaries. But what can you expect of children when they see their parents, on the same day, come here for cigars and other unnecessary things? It's the

so-called Christians who seem to necessitate most of this Sunday opening, just as it is with the ever-increasing Sunday travel. And the same thing is true of some of the other bad features of our business."

"Have you seen many of our people in here on Sunday, the last few weeks, Mr. Talbot?"

"No, Mr. Stanton, I'll have to admit, and I'm glad to admit, that there has been a great falling off in Presbyterian Sunday custom here since that remarkable Sunday, and in the other lines too; and that has been one of the things which has made my conscience very uneasy. Well, I shall try a clean drug business for a while, and, if I can make a living, shall stick to it, for I like the business; but it shall be a question of clean or close. In the uncertainty as to whether we can make a clean store go or not, I can't promise very much for the coming year for benevolences; but I can make it one dollar a week anyway, and perhaps increase it later."

The list was complete! A soul was saved from deadly peril! The experiment of a clean drug store in Jaconsett proved a success. Stephen Talbot, working in the store with his father, was so overcome by the revolution which began that Saturday night that he no longer despised the Christian profession on account of the inconsistency of his father and other Christians, whose weaknesses he had seen, but came out clearly as a follower of the Master, and thus completed the

circle of Dr. Sears' class. It was late that night before the committee had its report complete for presentation next day; but all its members slept the sleep of thankful satisfaction, and awoke assured that they should have the blessed presence of their Lord yet more fully manifested as they went up to his holy house.

That house was packed to the doors when the service began with the doxology, never so fully appreciated before. The note of praise pervaded the entire service, and Mr. Stanton took as his text the eleventh verse of the ninth chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians: "Being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God," and that which he based thereon was rather a thankful account of what the church had been led to accomplish when its whole life had been enriched by the vision of its Master's presence, than an exhortation to the fulfillment of an obligation.

"We may congratulate ourselves," he said, "but rather give praise to our God, that we are the first church of any considerable size in the United States of America to attain to the ideal of a part for every member in the local church support, in the helping of the poor, and in the evangelization of the world. Yet how poor a ground for self-congratulation it seems when we think for a moment that that merely means that we are the first church to be consistent with the very constitution and mission of the church, the first to

come unanimously to the conclusion that we will take marching orders from the One whom every one of us long ago declared to be the Great Commander! Let us be humbly thankful, rather than boastful, as we look over the fruits of the campaign, which had to be waged first among our own forces before we were in any condition to wage a victorious campaign against the enemy. For the first time in its history, Westminster Church has, in some adequate sense, realized the power that lies in singleness of aim, unitedness of effort and a holy ambition; for the first time it has attained to some appreciation of the fact that true riches are not in the things received and held and used for self, but in bountifulness; that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, not even in the financial measure of the gifts which he gives, but in the loving-kindness of his heart toward all men, and the expression of that loving-kindness in a self-forgetting service, in person or through his means. We have come to these convictions through the only effective way—through the realization that our God is not the God of the dead but the God of the living, that the visible Master of the Apostles is just as truly our Master and present with us, though invisible to the eye of flesh. If we never lose the vision, we shall never lose these most precious of all riches: when we have once tasted of the heavenly gift, who of us could wish to return to the husks?

"You are all interested in learning of the financial results, though they are, after all, not the matter of chief importance. I rejoice more over the one who has heretofore given nothing and now gives ten cents a week than over the one who has given ten cents and now gives twenty cents, because the former has formerly had no part in the work of his Lord, has accepted no measure of responsibility as his, while now he accepts one. I rejoice more over the child with an income of twenty-five cents a week who gives five cents, than over the man with an income of one hundred dollars a week who gives five dollars, because the former involves the larger self-sacrifice. Were it not for the violation of confidences, I should like much to tell you of some of those the abundance of whose joy and their deep poverty have abounded unto the riches of their liberality. There are some among us who will some day see a larger vision than they have yet seen, will do larger things and grow more rich toward God, with consequent richer blessings for themselves. But we all have some part in the joy and thanksgiving of this day; and it shall be only a day of thanksgiving for us, except as that thanksgiving may lead—as it always should—to renewed consecration.

"Now for the figures: Last year, out of seven hundred and seventy resident members of the church, three hundred and twenty-five gave toward the support of the church, also eighty-

three who were not members, making four hundred and eight, giving six thousand three hundred and fifty dollars. During this new year seven hundred and seventy members and one hundred and thirty-seven others are to give for this purpose a total of eleven thousand four hundred and thirty-five dollars. The fact that, though all are now giving, and many twice as much as before, the total is not twice the former figure, indicates that the non-givers had been, for the most part, those of modest incomes, who felt that the church was well cared for without their assistance; and also that there is considered to be a limit to the needs of the local church. They have been convinced that the former is not true, while the latter is. We can, to good advantage, spend on better facilities for worship and work the larger sum now at our disposal; but to put much more than this into the work would be unwise and wrong, in view of the world's need.

"For local beneficence there was given, by an unknown number of givers, last year, two hundred and thirty dollars. This year every member of the church and many of the congregation will unite in giving twenty-five hundred dollars, the greater portion of which will, perhaps, be used for the starting of the long-talked-of mission church and Sunday school on Kendall Street.

"For home missions, approximately two hundred and seventy members of the church and fifteen of the congregation gave last year fifteen

hundred twenty-seven dollars and forty-five cents, not counting what was given at the close of the year by a number in atonement for past shortcomings. This year seven hundred and seventy members of the church and ninety-four of the congregation will give twelve thousand five hundred dollars. The church can support with this sum eight or ten missionaries and their work, in several different states, or two or three stations or schools.

"For foreign missions, with their almost unlimited needs, during the past year, approximately two hundred and twenty members of the church and five of the congregation have given seven hundred twenty-five dollars and thirty cents. This year seven hundred and seventy members and eighty-five of the congregation have promised to give thirty-seven thousand five hundred and forty dollars for this cause; and with this sum we can either support one large mission station or two or three small ones in the midst of heathenism, with all their varied forms of missionary activity, or provide for twenty missionary families in as many different fields. At our next concert of prayer we will consider and determine these questions.

"No doubt the question will arise in the minds of some of you as to whether there is any call for such sums of money for the work. Brief consideration will remind us that other churches are not yet giving in this way, and that, even

were we to give ten times as much as this, it would supply but a small fraction of the increase in annual contributions importunately needed by the Presbyterian Church if it would meet the present opportunity and fulfill in the next few years its measure of responsibility for the evangelization of the world. Why do these figures look large? Not by comparison with the other ways in which we spend money; not by comparison with our means; for, add together all the items I have mentioned, and you still are far below even one-tenth of the aggregate income of the members of the church and congregation. No; it is by comparison with the pitiful playing with the King's business, to which the church at large has been so long accustomed, that our present figures startle us. Single members of our church have shown themselves able to give more than the entire amount of the church's contribution; and I have no idea that the church will stop with this year's giving, having tasted the supreme joy of giving in scriptural fashion. We have not yet known the full flavor: our gifts are not yet at work, securing for us the personal interest in many fields which will make us feel that we are not only at work here ourselves, but that the labor of our brains and hands is preaching the gospel to the heathen, and teaching men, women and children of many tongues to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them, that while we may ourselves work for but ten hours, or twelve, in the

day, the sun never sets on the world-wide work of our church. And I feel that the sweetest, tenderest element of our joy is yet to come through the having of our young men and women, who have grown up among us, who belong to the families of our church and to us, as our representatives in these fields. Not a few have already volunteered, as you know, and you may be disposed to cry, 'Enough: we can spare no more!' But just as surely as the living Christ has revealed himself to us, so surely will there be more of our young people who will say, 'Here am I, Lord; send me.' While it would not require more than one in three hundred and fifty of the members of the entire Church to give the gospel to the unevangelized, yet so little has the Church at large seen the vision that we who have seen it must do what we can to make up for the general failure. It should be regarded as a duty and a privilege, in every church, continually to pray and labor and expect that our young people will devote themselves to the meeting of the world's greatest need, that our Lord may not be kept waiting another nineteen hundred years before the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea. The sacrifice of giving a son or a daughter is more than that of giving a million dollars; but the pleasure is proportionately greater. Ye who have millions to give, and give them, happy are ye; ye who have sons and daughters to give, and do not withhold them,

happier are ye; ye who can and do give both, who shall declare the bounds of the happiness which the Lord God will pour into your bosoms? Only do it not for the sake of the happiness, but for the sake of him who loved us and who washed us from our sins in his own blood, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

This is by no means all that the pastor said to his people on that glad thanksgiving day. He enumerated the largely increased gifts to the other boards of the church, to the Bible and tract societies, and he laid great emphasis on the thought that bountifulness does not consist in abundance, but in the spirit of self-denying love. At the close he offered a prayer of thanksgiving and consecration, joyfully acknowledging the Presence which had given the victory, and unreservedly presenting the church, its members, their children, their means, as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, a spiritual service. And on that day four more of Westminster's young people announced to their pastor that they had said, "Here am I, Lord; send me." Among them was Lena Harden; and not even by a word would her father say her nay.

It was Henry Austin's idea that found expression in a little informal organization of the "Westminster Volunteers," which came into being during the following week. It soon became evident that the mutual interest between him and Lena Harden was more than a passing attraction,

and long before he sailed for his station in China, it was known that they would labor together in the foreign field, though Henry would go in advance, for a start on the language, while Lena finished her college course. Though some of the "Volunteers" sailed that year, and others were to wait for years to come, yet all drew together in a delightfulness and tenderness of fellowship possible only to those whose consecration is complete, and whose relations to one another form but the expansion of that fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

As for John Stanton and his wife, genuine and keen was their satisfaction when they received word that, after careful consideration, the board had decided to appoint them to the leadership of the little band who would go out that year to China, to gain a few years of experience at one of the established stations, and then themselves open up a "Westminster Station" among China's millions, where they might also welcome other recruits from the volunteer band. They had been ready for any decision, either to remain with their more than ever beloved church, to undertake to carry the Westminster spirit to the church at home, or to go in person to the far-away work; but, both as a proof of the genuineness of their devotion, and because of the fewness of the laborers, they rejoiced in the decision that they should relinquish to others the abundant comforts of this flourishing parish and become part

of the little company who would accept the modest support, the sad separations, the trials, perils and joys of the foreign missionary, in the assurance that the Christ, never before so real, would be with them even unto the end of the world.

What was the amazement of the church when they heard that George Quincy, after learning that the Stantons were going to China, had been quite unable to get away from the impression that some man from Westminster Church must be found to give himself to the passing on of the Westminster spirit. After much deliberation he had written to the Board of Foreign Missions offering to give up his business, and, at his own charges, become a traveling exponent of the Westminster idea. His offer had been most gratefully accepted, and in a few months he expected to be starting on his new work. Never having married, the lack of home ties made him an ideal man for such a task. Missed indeed he would be at Westminster; but there were many others coming forward to fill his place there. An intimate classmate of Mr. Stanton, who had caught the fire from him, was called as his successor in Westminster pulpit, and under his ministrations the church went on to better and ever better things, it becoming a thoroughly understood principle that no one could be received into membership in the church who did not intelligently recognize his duty to contribute regularly, as God had prospered him,

for the support of the church and the evangelization of the world, as one of the indispensable evidences of genuine conversion and true acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Master. From Westminster Church volunteers were never lacking for the local mission established on Kendall Street, which grew into a flourishing church; and from among her young people some offered themselves for teaching and preaching in the home mission fields, so that, looking upon the world as one great field, the particular call to be determined by needs and adaptation and personal circumstances, the whole church operated as one strong army, ready to endure hardness, never suffering themselves to be entangled with the affairs of this life, that they might please Him who called them to be soldiers. And when any new ideal of consecration presented itself, and faith halted, or the suggestion was raised that the church was doing too much, the one determining question was always, If it will redound yet more to the glory of God, why not?

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